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Cuprins

CHILD ABUSE IN IGBOLAND OF NIGERIA: INFLUENCE OF CULTURE ON PARENTING STYLES

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Abstract: *Child abuse is an international problem that happens everywhere including Igboland of Nigeria. Nigeria has three major ethnic groups, Hausa, Yoruba and Igbo. Igbo parents are known for their love for children but there are cases of child abuse in different families in Igboland. This research explains the ugly phenomenon of child abuse and the concepts that surrounds the problem. The goals of this study were to explore how Igbo culture influences parenting and how some parenting styles can cause child abuse and neglect. A research was carried out within Igboland of Nigeria. A sample of 510 Igbo parents voluntarily completed an anonymous questionnaire. The results reveal the fact that culture influences both the parental styles and the parental perception of child abuse. The issue of child abuse and neglect was expounded in the light of ecological systems theory of Urie Bronfenbrenner.*

Keywords: *Child abuse; culture; ecological systems theory; Igbo parents; Parenting Styles.*

INTRODUCTION

Thomas Gordon in his famous book *Parent effectiveness training* stated that "when people become parents, something strange and unfortunate happens. They begin to assume a role or act a part and forget that they are people. Now that they have entered the sacred realm of parenthood, they feel they must take up the mantle of parents. Now they earnestly try to behave in certain ways because they think that is how parents should behave" (Gordon, 1970, 13). Not with standing the fact that parenting job seems to be difficult and challenging, it is expected that a parent should show love and affection to the child. Parental love, care and affection, play a big role in the psychological development of the child. Parents are supposed to make the home the safest place for the child (Formella & Ricci, 2010). Unfortunately, some parents abuse their child (Ugwuanyi & Formella, 2018; 2019).

Therefore, the purpose of this research work is to see the link between culture, parenting styles and child abuse. We will explain how it influences each other by using Urie Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory as our principal theory of reference. We will equally present the research that was carried out in Igboland of Nigeria. This will serve as a holistic approach to the problem of child abuse in Igboland of Nigeria. The child in Igboland lives within the environment and Urie Bronfenbrenner repeated in most of his works that "the psychological development of the child is enhanced through his involvement in progressively more complex, enduring patterns of reciprocal contingent interaction with people with whom he has established a mutual and enduring emotional attachment" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, 34).

The theory sustains that "the ecological environment is conceived topologically as a nested arrangement of concentric structures, each contained within the next. These structures are referred to as the *microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, and macrosystems*" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 22). It was later that he added another system by name chronosystem. In a nutshell, *microsystem* involves the structures and processes taking place in an immediate setting containing the developing person; *mesosystem* comprises of the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings containing the developing person, *exosystem* encompasses two or more settings that do not involve the developing person, but in which events occur that affect, or are affected by, what happens in the setting containing the developing person, *macrosystem* refers to the pattern of ideology and organization of the social institutions common to a particular culture or subculture (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Chronosystem on the other hand, "permits one to identify the impact of prior life events and experiences, singly or sequentially, on subsequent development" (Bronfenbrenner, 2005, 83).

The child makes the first contact with the parents in the microsystem and other systems especially the macrosystem which dwells on culture, directly or indirectly influences the parent-child relationship. A poor parent-child relationship leads to abuse. Within the ecological systems theory, there are other aspects like acceptance of physical punishment, unwanted pregnancy, socio-economic status, Igbo family tradition, etc., which affects the relationship between the parent and the child (Ayinmode & Adegunloye, 2011). Understanding child abuse (Wolfe, 1999) especially from the ecological perspective helps one to see the context in which child development and child abuse take place (Ugwuanyi & Formella, 2019).

For the sake of clarity, it is important to state that "parenting style can be described as all strategies (behaviors, attitudes and values) parents use to interact with their children and influence their physical, emotional, social and intellectual development" *(Darling & Steinberg, 1995, 488). This work recognizes four parenting styles which are described* as follows: "authoritative parents are high on both demanding and responsiveness; authoritarian parents are high on demanding but low on responsiveness measures; indulgent parents are high on responsiveness and low on demanding measures; and uninvolved parents are low on both demanding and responsiveness measures" (Ayinmode & Adegunloye, 2011, 60). Having explained our theory of reference and other key concepts, let us approach the methodology of our research.

METHOD

The main objective of our research was to explore how Igbo culture influences parenting and how some parenting styles can cause child abuse and neglect.

The target of the research was the Igbo parents in Nigeria. The parents were chosen because the first impact of the child is in the microsystem of the ecological theory of Bronfenbrenner (1979). The parents happen to be the major people to influence the child in this setting. We were not excluding other systems in his theory because they are considered as external influences on the child. Parents influence on the children are seen in the family, schools where they serve as teachers and guardians in the community (Formella, 2019). It is worthy to note that parents create the environment where the child is raised. Therefore, the parent can equally abuse the child for some reasons; parenting style, parent having a history of child abuse, cultural influence, etc. To this effect, approved questionnaires were used to accomplish and realize our subject matter.

Measures and procedure

Our research instrument was composed of different tools; the first is the socio-demographic profile. The second includes the questionnaire that studies perception and childhood experience of maltreatment (PCHEMQ-*Perception and Childhood Experience of Maltreatment Questionnaire*). It is used to measure the five types of child abuse and neglect; (Physical abuse, Emotional/Psychological abuse, Sexual abuse, Child neglect and Child labor) (Bammeke & Fakunmoju, 2016).

The third tool is PS-FFQ *(Parenting Style Four Factors Questionnaire*). It is an empirical tool which aims at identifying four parenting styles like authoritarian, Authoritative, Permissive and Uninvolved (Shyny, 2017). The fourth is the questionnaire that studies the Igbo culture. We have constructed the questionnaire and it was based on the culture of Igbo people.

The questionnaires were distributed in Igboland, it was not done through computer assisted techniques. Even though it is a good means to reach to a lot of people. Though some factors like limited access to internet were considered before adopting manual distribution. Basically, we distributed the questionnaires with the help of four other Nigerian professors teaching in different universities. The respondents were asked to fill the questionnaires with either a pencil or a pen because it was a paper type. By this we mean that the questionnaires were printed on paper. Again, the study population did not encounter lots of problems in responding to the questions. In fact, they responded within a short period of time. It took majority of the respondents 15-20 minutes to complete the questionnaires but they were others that took up to 15-40 minutes to complete.

Subjects

Our sample was composed of 509 parents: 248 are males (48,7%) while 261 were females (51,3%). The age group in our questionnaire was distributed according to the following ages: 20-30 years (25%), 31-40 years (36%), 41-50 years (16,7%) and those over 51 years (22,4%). The Igbo people are the ethnic group of South-eastern Nigeria. The geopolitical zone is currently made up of five states: Abia (11,8%), Anambra (17,3%), Ebonyi (12,2%), Enugu (47,2%), and Imo states (11,6%). The number of children for each family was divided in these groups: 1 child (20,6%), 2-3 children (42,4%), 4-5 children (27,1%), 6-7 children (9,4%), and over 8 children (0,4%).

RESULTS

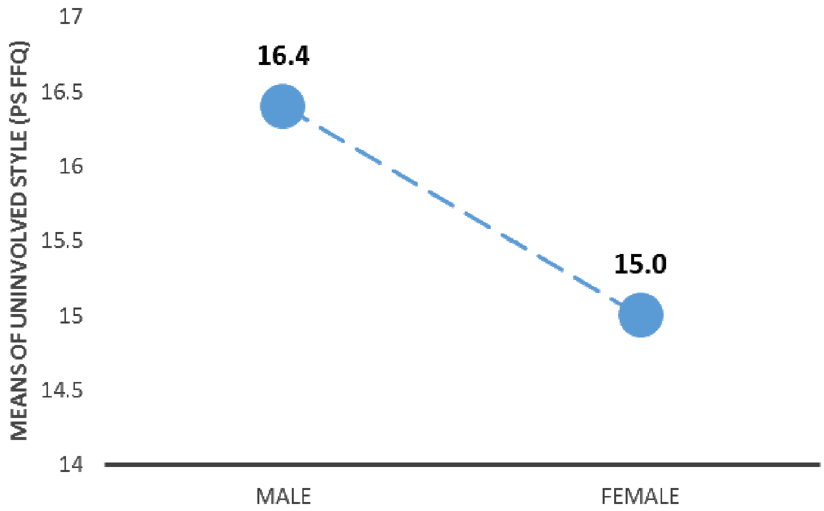
Differences in the social demographic profiles of the sample

During the data analysis, one of our first questions concerned the presence or absence of differences in the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample. With regards to gender, our curiosity aimed to understand if male respondents, as compared to female respondents, were more involved in sexual abuse. ANOVA analysis was performed to test whether or not the means of several groups are equal or they differ significantly.

Table 1. ANOVA table. Gender differences ($p<.05$)

	F	***Sig.***
Physical Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	,083	,774
Child Neglect Opinions (PCHEMQ)	,060	,807
Psychological Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	,051	,822
Sexual Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	1,157	,283
Child Labor Opinions (PCHEMQ)	,089	,765
Authoritarian Style (PS FFQ)	,825	,364
Uninvolved Style (PS FFQ)	**7,175**	**,008**
IGBO as value	,004	,948
IGBO Parents transmitters of culture	,042	,839
IGBO Permissive style in IGBO culture	,599	,439

Graphic 1. Mean plot. Gender differences: Uninvolved style (PS FFQ) (p<.05)



As can be seen from the graph, there is a significant difference between males and females. In the case of observed variable, it appears that in "Uninvolved style" males are significantly more "uninvolved" than females. The graph gives us a clear picture of the result. Graph 1 shows that males have 16.4 and the females have 15.0. In this case, the males have significantly higher mean than the females. Therefore, the males are more associated with uninvolved style. Male have higher score in uninvolved style comparing to female.

Table 2. ANOVA table. State differences (p<.05)

	F	*Sig.*
Physical Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	,682	,605
Child Neglect Opinions (PCHEMQ)	1,825	,123
Emotional/Psychological Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	1,158	,328
Sexual Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	1,019	,397
Child Labor Opinions (PCHEMQ)	,559	,692
Authoritarian Style (PS FFQ)	1,595	,174
Uninvolved Style (PS FFQ)	**3,622**	**,006**
IGBO as value	1,378	,240
IGBO Parents transmitters of culture	1,534	,191
IGBO Permissive style in IGBO culture	2,040	,088

Graphic 2. Mean plot. State differences: Uninvolved style (PS FFQ) ($p<.05$)

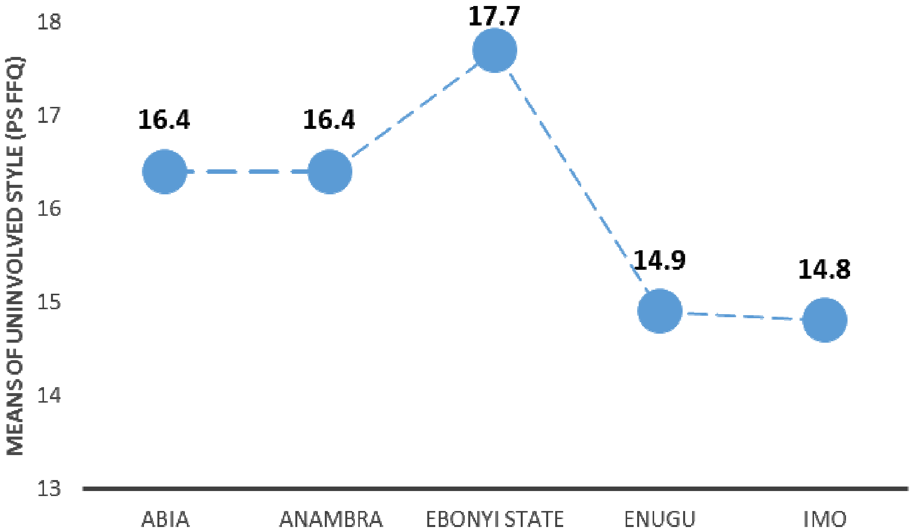


Table 2 shows that only uninvolved style of parenting is statistically significant. As can be seen from graph 2, there is a significant difference between Ebonyi state and two states, Enugu and Imo. In the case of observed variable, it appears that in "Uninvolved style" parents from Ebonyi state are significantly more "uninvolved" than parents from Enugu and Imo state.

Cultural influence on parenting styles

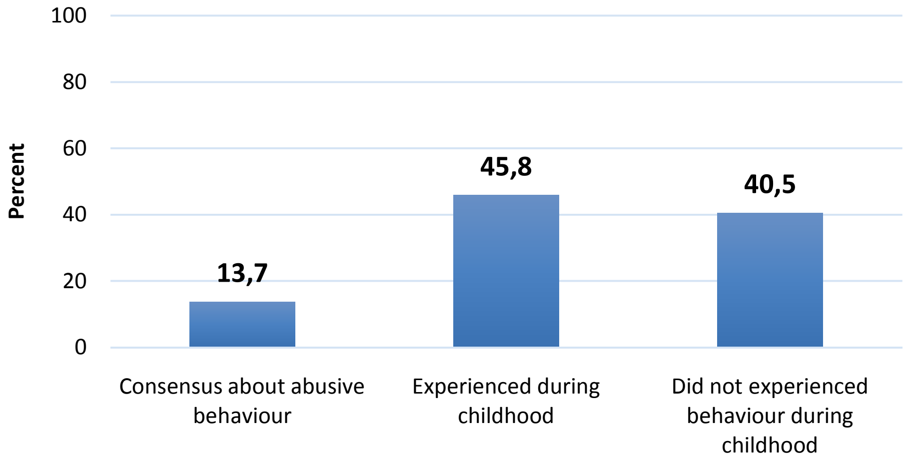
Our research did not dwell only on the differences in socio-demographic profile, we formulated also the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Parents who experiences verbal abuse during childhood are more likely to abuse their child verbally and physically.

In verifying this hypothesis, we concentrated on the experience that Igbo parents had during childhood and the possible effect it is having on them as parents. It's like looking at the past and comparing it with the present. This is possible because in the questionnaire, there were measures where respondents were expected to state their experience during childhood. For a better understanding of the verification of the hypotheses, we will present below a diagram, the ANOVA table and the mean plot.

The diagram presents the distribution of Perception and childhood experience of maltreatment (PCHEMQ).

Diagram 1. Distribution of answers: "*Verbally abusing, cursing, or calling a child horrible names*" during childhood



The diagram shows that parents who gave their consensus that it is an abusive behavior were 13,8% of our sample, those who experienced it were 45,8%, while those who did not experience it were 40,5%. In the case of the observed variable, it appears that in the measured variable "*verbally abusing, cursing, or calling a child horrible names*", the percent of those who experienced it during childhood was higher.

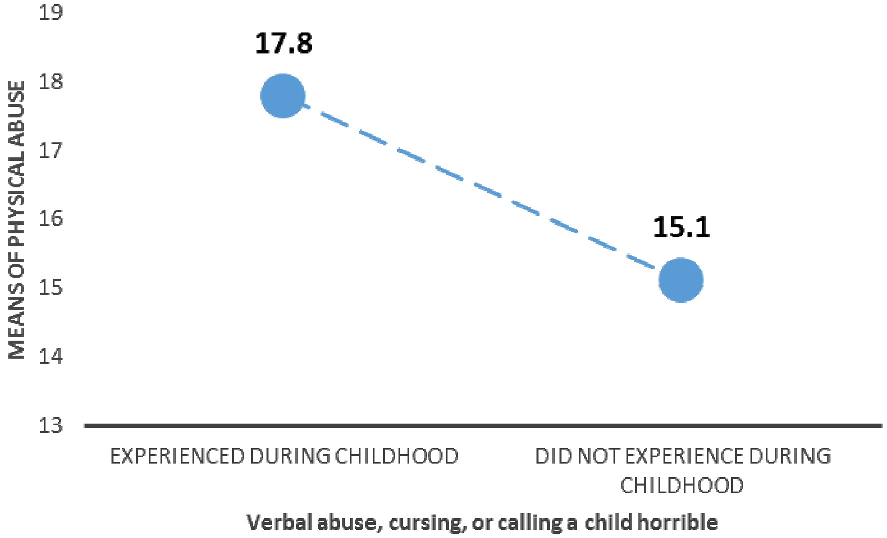
Subsequently, the differences between the two groups were verified: those that experienced a particular abuse during childhood and those who did not experience any abuse during childhood. Here our focus was on the experience of verbal abuse, cursing or calling a child horrible. The ANOVA analysis was performed.

Table 3. ANOVA table. Differences between Parents who experienced and who did not experience "*verbal abuse, cursing, or calling a child horrible*", during childhood (p<.05)

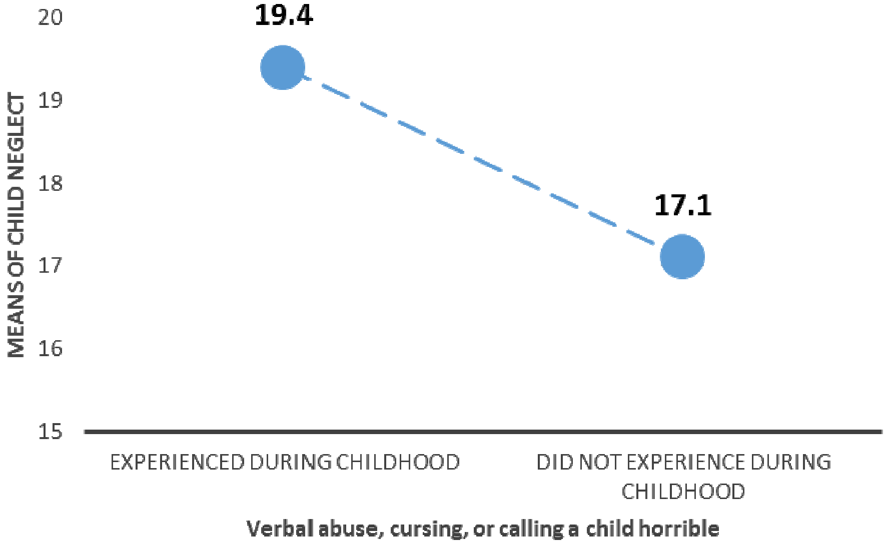
	F	***Sig.***
Physical Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	**33,221**	**,000**
Child Neglect Opinions (PCHEMQ)	**17,182**	**,000**
Emotional/Psychological Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	**55,808**	**,000**
Sexual Abuse Opinions (PCHEMQ)	1,990	,159
Child Labor Opinions (PCHEMQ)	**16,144**	**,000**

As emerged from the analysis, statistically significant differences have emerged in four variables: Physical abuse, Child neglect, Emotional /psychological abuse and Child labor. The graphs below represent the differences between two groups.

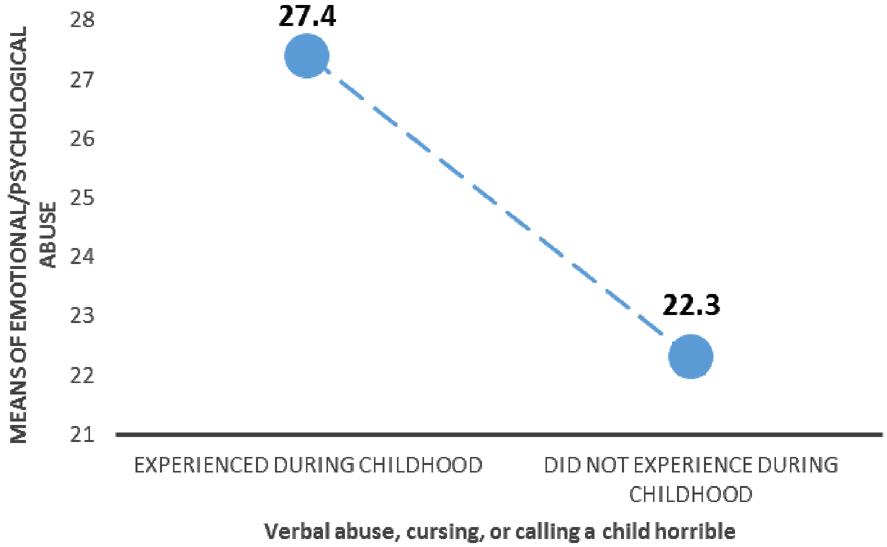
Graphic 3. Mean plot. Differences between parents who experienced and those who did not experience "*verbal abuse, cursing, or calling a child horrible*" during childhood: Physical abuse (p<.05)



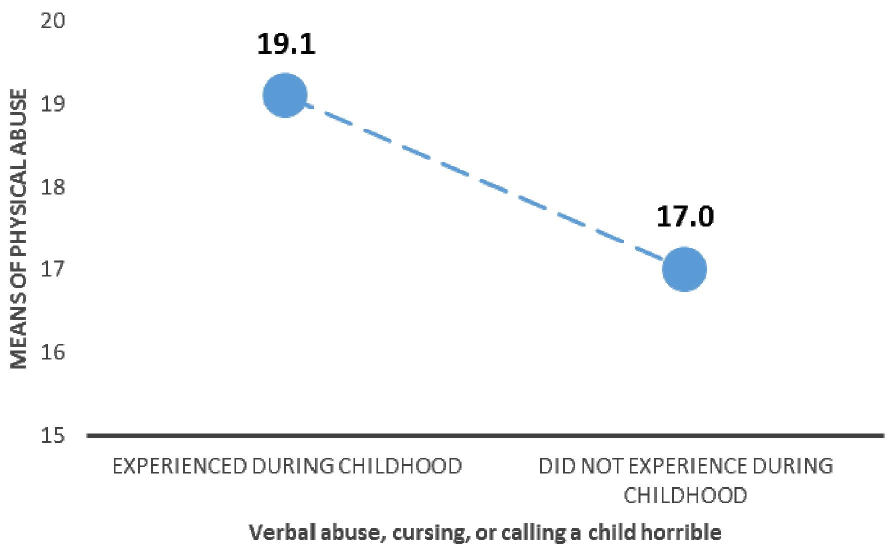
Graphic 4. Mean plot. Differences between parents who experienced and those who did not experience "*verbal abuse, cursing, or calling a child horrible*" during childhood: Child Neglect (p<.05)



Graphic 5. Mean plot. Differences between parents who experienced and those who did not experience "*verbal abuse, cursing, or calling a child horrible*" during childhood: Emotional/Psychological abuse (p<.05)



Graphic 6. Mean plot. Differences between parents who experienced and those who did not experience "*verbal abuse, cursing, or calling a child horrible*" during childhood: Child labor (p<.05)



From the ANOVA analysis, emerged statistically significant differences between those who experienced and those who did not experience verbal abuse, cursing, or calling a child horrible during childhood. As can be seen from the graphs, in all four variables those who experienced this abuse during childhood had a higher mean than those who did not experience it. Therefore, we can confirm the hypothesis that parents who experienced verbal abuse during childhood are more likely to abuse a child verbally and physically.

We proceeded with the analysis, performing the correlational analysis. The goal was to establish whether there are possible connections among Authoritarian and Uninvolved style and variables of Perception and Childhood Experience of Maltreatment Questionnaire (PCHEMQ).

The second specific hypothesis stated that:

Hypothesis 2: The authoritarian and uninvolved styles used by parents increase the risk of psychological abuse, sexual abuse and child labor.

Two questionnaires were used to test this hypothesis: *Parenting Style Four Factors Questionnaire* (PS-FFQ) and *Perception and Childhood Experience of Maltreatment Questionnaire* (PCHEMQ).

Table 4. Correlation table

	Physical Abuse	Child Neglect	Emotional/ Psychological Abuse	Sexual Abuse	Child Labor
Authoritarian style	-	-	.11*	.10*	.09*
Uninvolved style	-	.16**	.14**	.17**	.19**

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

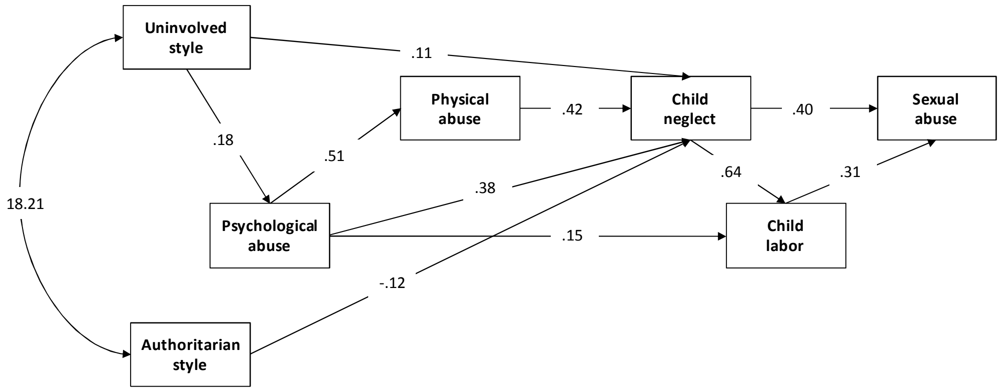
Significant positive correlations were found between Authoritarian style and Emotional/Psychological abuse ($r = 0.11$, $p < .05$), Sexual abuse ($r = 0.10$, $p < .05$) and Child Labor ($r = 0.09$, $p < .05$). Correlations were slightly higher for Uninvolved style and Child neglect ($r = 0.16$, $p < .01$), Emotional/Psychological abuse ($r = 0.14$, $p < .01$), Sexual abuse ($r = 0.17$, $p < .01$) and Child labor ($r = 0.19$, $p < .01$). No significant relationships were noted between Physical abuse and both Authoritarian and Uninvolved style, and between Authoritarian style and Child neglect.

Even if the correlations were not very high, results can confirm that there is a link between variables of *Parenting Style Four Factors Questionnaire* (PS-FFQ) and *Perception and Childhood Experience of Maltreatment Questionnaire* (PCHEMQ), except Physical abuse.

Path Analysis. The link between uninvolved parenting style and child abuse

Here our scope is to test, estimate the direction and intensity of the links between both parental Authoritarian, Uninvolved styles, the risk of Psychological abuse, Child labor, Sexual abuse, and above all, to provide information on the causal processes. To this effect, structural equation models (SEM) have been constructed (Graphic 7). AMOS software (the SPSS additional package) was used in the construction of the models. The models were tested using the maximum likelihood criterion. The multi-equation approach was chosen because it is more suitable for providing a representation of real processes, even if there are simplified. Each of these equations expresses the causal link between the exogenous variables (Uninvolved style and Authoritarian style, *Covariance* = 18.21) and the endogenous variables (Physical abuse, Child neglect, Psychological abuse, Child labor, Sexual abuse).

Graphic 7. Path analysis. Structural Equation Model (SEM)



On the Graphic 7, each vector indicates the direction of the influence of one variable on another and its standardized coefficient B describes the weight of this bond.

The model reported the following values: Chi-square = 14,0 (df = 10, p = .17); Good Fit Index (GFI) = .990; Normed Fit Index (NFI) =. 993; Relative Fit Index (RFI) = .986; Comparative Fit Index (CFI) =.998; Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) = .028. The last one, RMSEA coefficient, is one of the most sensitive indicators of the goodness (stability) of the model. It is generally assumed that an RMSEA value of approximately .05 or less indicates a good stability of the model in relation to the degrees of freedom. Statisticians claim that a value of about .08 results in a reasonable approximation error, but also suggest not to assume a model with the RMSEA value greater than .10. Furthermore, the values GFI, NFI, RFI and CFI indicate a very good model when they approach 1 (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). In our model, the RMSEA coefficient is <.05 and values of the model fit coefficients are very high, therefore it can be assumed that it has reached its capability to effectively express theoretical concepts with good stability.

From Path Analysis, it can be deduced that Uninvolved style has a direct impact on Psychological abuse and Child neglect. The Child neglect variable was found to be a mediator variable between two parenting styles and Child labor as well as Sexual abuse. Child labor also appears to be a mediating variable between Psychological and Sexual abuse.

All the elements contained in the SEM model reveal the presence of a psychological mechanism, which describes that the two parenting styles, in particular the uninvolved one, can affect the abusive treatment of the child. In other words, it seems that the parents of our sample, who experienced an abusive behavior from the parents during their childhood and currently are inclined to emotional indifference towards their children, are more likely disposed to adopt abusive behavior towards them.

CONCLUSION

The issue of child abuse was expounded in the light of Urie Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Bronfenbrenner's theory is an analytical tool for understanding individual development within complex social systems. Every child develops within many deeply interconnected rings of influence, much like the way a stone dropped into water is connected to and surrounded by concentric rings. The interconnected rings encircling the developing person includes the five systems proposed by the ecological theory (Kraus, 2008).

The empirical study was addressed to investigate the problem of child abuse in relation to the experience of parents during their childhood. We found that parents who experienced verbal abuse during childhood are more likely to abuse their own child verbally and physically. It was also found that parental Authoritarian and Uninvolved styles can increase the risk of psychological, sexual abuse and child labor.

We are aware that this study has both strengths and limitations. However, considering it as an exploratory study, we have identified some new open questions. We are concerned to know if we will get the same result in the other ethnic groups in Nigeria. We have to bear in mind that Nigeria is made up of three major ethnic groups, Yoruba, Hausa and Igbo and over 250 other ethnic groups. Each ethnic group has its own language, culture and unique way of life. It would be interesting to carry out the same research in Yoruba and Hausa land, and see if the results would be the same or different from what we have in Igboland. The outcome of each research will help the psychologist to suggest some possible ways of preventing child abuse. However, true child protection starts with you. It comes from awareness, garnering knowledge of what comprises child abuse. Having a good understanding of child abuse and neglect. Again, it comes from the willingness to act when we see or suspect abuse (Daly &Wright, 2017).

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THE STUDY OF EMPLOYEE MOTIVATION IN A CHINESE PRIVATE ENTERPRISE

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Abstract: *With the development of Chinese economy, private enterprises have gradually become the backbone of the competitive market. At the same time, with the rapid development of private enterprises, the incentive of internal employees has been paid more and more attention. Then, the establishment of an effective incentive mechanism is a necessary condition to maintain and increase the value of Chinese private enterprises and to achieve sustainable development. However, due to the improper motivation of employees in private enterprises, the loss of employees is widespread. Therefore, private enterprises should overcome their own operational drawbacks and attach importance to the role of high-quality talents and employee motivation.The purpose of this paper is to test whether the employee incentive measures provided by the private enterprise can meet the needs of employees and find out the specific incentive factors that need to be improved. Subsequently, the analysis results of SPSS software show that there are great differences in employees' demand and satisfaction. The research results of this paper can provide data reference for the private enterprise to help them find out the incentive factors of employee dissatisfaction to take corresponding measures to gradually narrow the gap between employee demand and satisfaction.*

Keywords: *Employee Motivation; Chinese Private Enterprise; Incentive needs; Incentive satisfaction.*

1. Introduction

The study involved employees of a private company that makes solar panels and collected a total of 207 valid questionnaires. The main aim of this paper is to test whether there is a great difference between employees' demand for three types of incentives and the satisfaction of motivations provided by the private enterprise, so as to judge whether the employees are satisfied with incentives adopted by the company or not. By using the Paired-Samples T-Test in SPSS I obtained the data results which show that there are significant differences in employees' incentive demand and satisfaction among the three types of incentive methods provided by the private enterprise. Furthermore, the gap between demand and satisfaction of economic rewards is the largest, followed by training development and social relationships. After the difference analysis, this paper puts forward specific operational measures for these three types of incentives, hoping to be helpful to the improvement of employee incentives in this enterprise.

The research results of this paper will provide the private enterprise with data reference to let them understand the shortcomings of employee incentive measures and thus take targeted remedial measures and increase employee' satisfaction. Only in this way can the enterprise attract talents, motivate employees and enhance the comprehensive competitiveness of private enterprises.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Basic Concept of Motivation

According to Zhang&Li (2002), motivation is the psychological process of stimulating, promoting and strengthening human behavior to promote the individual to achieve the goal effectively. Therefore, the so-called employee motivation is in the process of human resources management, managers use incentive theory and methods to meet or limit the various needs of employees in varying degrees, thus causing the change of employees' psychological state to achieve motivation. Moreover, through the positive and negative strengthening, give people some internal motivation, people can continue to strive to achieve the desired goals of the organization to control and regulate their behavior.

Farooq (2015) states that the process of motivation begins with a need, which is a person's perception of his defects. These needs affect the thinking process of the employee and guide him to meet the needs by taking specific action patterns. The return on the action, as a feedback mechanism, supports employees to consider the criteria for future action by assessing its consequences. The process of motivation is mainly divided into the following aspects:

•Unsatisfied Need: When employees feel that their needs have not been met, the incentive process begins (Francis 2012).

•Tension: The unmet needs of the staff made him tension (Francis 2012).

•Drive: Through this tension, employees with unmet needs drive themselves to find specific goals. This tension is the driving force to achieve the goals set (Farooq 2015).

•Search Behavior: After looking for options based on their needs, employees begin to act on the options they choose (Francis 2012).

•Satisfaction of Need: After a long period of performance, the employee assesses whether the return meets his or her needs (Francis 2012).

•Reduction of Tension: When an employee feels that the desired needs have been met through the return of action, his nervousness is alleviated. Afterwards, he will reassess any further unmet needs and repeat the process (Farooq 2015).

2.2 Relationship between Employee Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is the emotional response of individuals to the current working conditions, while motivation is the driving force to pursue and meet their own needs (Wang & Lee, 2013). Luthans & Sommer (2005) state that different types of satisfaction can lead to different types of intentions and behaviors under different incentives, resulting in different types of rewards. From the study of Ali & Ahmed (2009), they confirm that there is a statistically significant relationship between reward and recognition as well as between motivation and satisfaction. Research shows that employees' job motivation and satisfaction vary according to changes in rewards or recognition offered to them. Lane (2010) argues that there are many different factors in the work environment, such as salary, working hours, the autonomy is given to employees, organizational structure and communication between employees and leaders may affect employees' job satisfaction. In addition, Robbins (2003) states that there are four main factors that determine job satisfaction.

The first is rewards, the salaries and promotions that are considered most relevant to job satisfaction because when employees feel they are getting a fair return, their satisfaction experience increases. Then, the second factor is the supportive work environment, and the next determining factor is that the organization provides challenging jobs. The final determinant is in harmony with colleagues. Milkovich & Gerhart (2011) claim that motivation theory involves personal needs, rewards and employee behavior, and that these factors motivate employees' job satisfaction through the impact of rewards. Taylor & Westover (2011) found that employees with high job satisfaction and motivation experience higher levels of intrinsic workplace attribute, especially interesting and autonomous work, as well as external workplace attributes, such as higher wages, more promotion prospects, better job security and harmony with their managers and colleagues. Nderitu (2013) believes that dissatisfied employees cannot complete the task in the best way, so the enterprise must motivate them to complete the task effectively and efficiently to help the organization to achieve its goals.

Lam et al. (2001) found that there is a positive relationship between job satisfaction and financial reward and that it is a key factor in determining employee job satisfaction. Different types of satisfaction lead to different goals and behaviors, which come from different types of motivations for different types of rewards (Luthans et al. 2005). Thomas (2011) states that we recognize the importance of reward and recognition in order to become motivated individuals, and these values are also important factors in determining employee satisfaction. Moreover, Vandenberghe& Trembley (2008) conclude that employees with high job satisfaction are motivated by rewards that support job engagement. According to Malhotra et al. (2007), rewards must be best strategically adjusted to achieve organizational goals, improve employees' motivation to better perform their work, and improve job satisfaction.

The study of Sell &Cleal (2011) shows that different psychosocial and work environment variables, such as workplace and social support, have a direct impact on job satisfaction, while the increase of reward does not improve the degree of dissatisfaction of employees. Another study by Catillo& Cano (2004) on job satisfaction of university teachers shows that the level of job satisfaction increases if employees give appropriate attention to interpersonal relationships, recognition and supervision. Lachowski et al. (2018) state that an important factor in overall job satisfaction is harmonious interpersonal relationships in the workplace, not only between colleagues in similar positions but most importantly with superiors. Ghenghesh (2013) found that the most important reason for the intrinsic motivation of teachers is to maintain a good relationship with colleagues and superiors. Then, the external factor of the working environment is a motivation for teachers to work harder. However, Rafiq et al. (2012) believe that there is a negative correlation between work environment and job satisfaction, and external reward is the best incentive factor leading to job satisfaction.

The results of Ali et al. (2015) on health and safety policies and their effects on employee satisfaction show that occupational health and safety policies in organizations have a positive impact on employee job satisfaction. Therefore, this shows that with occupational health and safety policies, employees are motivated and able to better perform their responsibilities.

Dartey-Baah& Amoako (2011) describe motivational factors, such as the nature of the job, the sense of achievement of the job, recognition by leaders, responsibilities entrusted to them, and opportunities for personal growth and promotion, which help employees to discover their value in the organization. This can improve the level of motivation of employees, and ultimately improve the internal well-being of employees and promote job satisfaction. The researchers conclude that employee training has a positive impact on job satisfaction, such as employees being able to contribute their performance and share training benefits through training, thereby improving productivity. Training here includes management development, education, traditional training and vocational training (Batool&Batool,2012). Yew (2011) believes that training and development help provide career development opportunities for employees and is also considered to be an important aspect of human resources management practice and integration of work experience.

The results of Chaudhary & Bhaskar (2016) show that staff of the department demonstrate that receiving training and development project can strengthen their functional areas and expertise. This helps them gain recognition from colleagues and leaders because they can act as resource personnel by sharing their knowledge and experience, as well as increased career promotion opportunities and benefits such as salary increases and bonuses.

3. Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to study the specific motivation that employees need and the satisfaction with the specific motivation provided by the private enterprise. Then through the data analysis to evaluate whether the needs of employees are met, that is, whether the needs and satisfaction match or not.

Figure 1: The Model of Theoretical Framework

From the above model, it shows that employee motivation is divided into three categories,namely, economic rewards, social relationships and training development.

The classification of these three types of motivations is mainly based on the three major needs of the ERG theory of Alderfer (1969) that is, the economic rewards correspond to the existing needs of the people, the social relationships correspond to the relatedness needs of the people and training development correspond to the needs of human growth. Therefore, we think that these three types of incentives can basically meet the incentive needs of employees.The following table shows the specific factors of these three types of incentives:

Table 1: Specific factors of three types of incentives

Economic Rewards	Social Relationships	Training Development
High Salary High welfare Paid Holiday Hold shares in a company Good commercial insurance Wages increase relatively fast with the number of years	Good working environment Harmonious relationship with colleagues The harmonious relationship between superior and subordinate Receive recognition and respect from leaders Have a sense of job achievement Democratic participation in corporate management	Good chance of promotion Provide good training and learning opportunities Develop a variety of skills A challenging job Good career development space

Moreover, the incentive needs of different employees are measured according to the degree of importance. The incentives provided by the private enterprise are measured according to the satisfaction of employees. In this paper, I use a five-point scale, the higher the score, the items are more approved by the testers.

3.1 Hypotheses

H1: There is asignificant difference between the incentive needs of employees and the satisfaction of motivations provided by the private enterprise for Economic Rewards.

H2: There is a significant difference between the incentive needs of employees and the satisfaction of motivations provided by the private enterprise for Social Relationships.

H3: There is a significant difference between the incentive needs of employees and the satisfaction of motivations provided by the private enterprise for Training Development.

3.2 Sample and Data Collection

The data for the study were collected from a large private company in China that specializes in solar cell modules. The company has about 300 employees, and my target is 250 questionnaires. As a result, I received a total of 231 responses, of which 207 were valid and could be analyzed in detail. Therefore, the effective response rate of the questionnaire is 82.8%. In addition, these data are mainly through the help of my friend who works in the company, inviting colleagues from different departments around him to fill out questionnaires on the Internet.

This study designed a questionnaire based on the research literature of many scholars at home and abroad and combined with the hypothesis and purpose of this paper. The questionnaire is divided into three parts, that is, the first part is the basic information of employees in the private enterprise, including gender, age, position level, working years and so on. Then, the second part is the three types of motivations needed by employees in the private enterprise.This part of the questions is asked according to all the motivational factors and set five options, which are divided into not important at all, unimportant, moderate, important and highly important. The corresponding scales are 1 to 5.

The last part is a survey of employees' satisfaction with the three types of incentives currently provided by the enterprise. This part of the questions is asked according to all the motivational factors as well, and there are also five options. According to the degree of satisfaction, it is divided into not satisfied at all, dissatisfied, moderate, satisfied and highly satisfied. Then, the corresponding scales are 1 to 5.

3.3 Analytical Methods

This paper used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) to analyze the data. The first part was a descriptive analysis of basic information of employees, so I used the descriptive statistics tool in SPSS. Then I used Paired-Samples T-Test to analyze whether there is asignificant difference between the incentive needs of employees and the motivations provided by the enterprise.After obtaining the above analysis results, I compared the mean of the two groups to analyze the degree of their gap. According to the differences, we got the matching degree between the incentives needs of employees and the incentives currently provided by the enterprise. Therefore, this study could provide a data basis for the private enterprise to provide matching incentives according to the needs of employees and enhance the motivation effects of employees.

4. Results

Through the descriptive analysis of SPSS, the following figures reflect the basic information about the respondents' gender, age, marital status, education qualification, position level and so on.

4.1 Introduction of Respondents

•**Gender of Respondents:**About 66.7 per cent of the respondents were men, while 33.3 per cent of the respondents were women, almost twice as many men as women.

•Age of Respondents:Most of the respondents were between the ages of 31 and 40 (35.8%), followed by those under the age of 30 (28.5%). The number of respondents aged 41 to 50 (21.7%) and over (14.0%) was relatively small, but the overall difference in the number of people of different ages was not significant.

•Marital Status of Respondents: In terms of marital status, most of the respondents were married, accounting for 78.3 per cent, while the proportion of single respondents was 19.8 per cent. Besides, the proportion of divorce and widow was the smallest, 1.9 per cent.

•Education Qualification of Respondents: The overall educational level of the participants was not high, most of the participants were lower than junior college (61.8%), followed by the junior college (28.5%). The proportion of bachelor's and master's degrees is very small, 9.2 per cent and 0.5 per cent, respectively.

•Position Level of Respondents: 76.3 per cent of the participants were workers, and the proportion of workers accounted for 3/4 of the total. For management, there is 11.6 per cent for junior managers, 9.2 per cent for middle managers and 2.9 per cent for senior managers.

•Working Years of Respondents: In terms of length of service, the difference between participants of different years was not significant. As shown above, about 25.6 per cent of employees have less than 1 year of work experience, 30.4 per cent of employees have 2-5 years of work experience, 34.3 per cent of employees have 5-10 years of work experience, and then relatively few people have more than 11 years of work experience, which is 9.7 per cent.

•Department of Respondents: There are about half of the participants come from the production sector, with is 53.6 per cent. While the rest of the participants account for similar and smaller proportions.

4.2 The Difference between Demand and Satisfaction of Employee Motivation Variables for Economic Rewards

Based on the results presented by paired-samples t-test, Table 2 shows that the p values of all factors are less than 0.05, indicating that there is a significant difference between the incentive needs for economic rewards and the incentive satisfaction provided by the enterprise.

By comparing the mean values of incentive demand and satisfaction in economic rewards, the results show that the average demand of all factors is greater than the average of satisfaction. What's more, the biggest gap between demand and satisfaction is high welfare (1.589), followed by paid holiday (1.415) and wage growth (1.333), and then the smallest pair is holding shares (0.749).

Table 2: Paired Samples T-Test for Demand and Satisfaction of Economic Rewards

	Economic Rewards	**Mean**	**Paired Differences Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Sig. (2-sided)**
Pair 1	Motivation Demand of Employees--high salary Level of satisfaction at the workplace--high salary	4.29 3.03	1.256	.914 1.092	.000
Pair 2	Motivational Demand of employees--high welfare Level of satisfaction at the workplace--high welfare	4.48 2.89	1.589	.775 1.123	.000
Pair 3	Motivational Demand of employees--paid holiday Level of satisfaction at the workplace--paid holiday	4.52 3.11	1.415	.768 1.161	.000
Pair 4	Motivational Demand of Employees--holding shares Level of satisfaction at the workplace--holding shares	3.35 2.60	.749	1.349 1.169	.000
Pair 5	Motivational Demand of employees--good commercial insurance Level of satisfaction at the workplace--good commercial insurance	4.26 3.24	1.014	.984 1.097	.000
Pair 6	Motivational Demand of employees--wages increase relatively fast with the number of years Level of satisfaction at the workplace--wages increase relatively fast with the number of years	4.32 2.99	1.333	.827 1.086	.000
Total Mean			1.226		

4.3 The Difference between Demand and Satisfaction of Employee Motivation Variables for Social Relationships

It is clear from Table 3 that the p values of all the motivational factors that compare demand and satisfaction are less than 0.05, so there is a significant difference between employees' demand and employees' satisfaction for all factors in social relationships.

The mean values of paired differences show that the difference in a good working environment is the largest, which is 0.990. This is followed by receiving recognition and respect by leaders (0.899) and having a sense of job achievement (0.831). In addition, the difference between a harmonious relationship with colleagues and democratic participation in business management is the smallest, 0.430 and 0.541, respectively.

Table 3: Paired Samples T-Test for Demand and Satisfaction of Social Relationships

	Social Relationships	**Mean**	**Paired Differences Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Sig. (2-sided)**
Pair 1	Motivational Demand of employees--good working environment Level of satisfaction at the workplace--goodworking environment	4.43 3.44	.990	.797 1.022	.000
Pair 2	Motivational Demand of Employees--harmonious relationship with colleagues Level of satisfaction at the workplace--harmonious relationship with colleagues	4.19 3.76	.430	.898 .885	.000
Pair 3	Motivational Demand of Employees--a harmonious relationship between superior and subordinate Level of satisfaction at the workplace--a harmonious relationship between superior and subordinate	4.33 3.63	.705	.813 .936	.000
Pair 4	Motivational Demand of Employees--receive recognition and respect from leaders Level of satisfaction at the workplace--receive recognition and respect from leaders	4.41 3.51	.899	.757 .944	.000
Pair 5	Motivational Demand of employees--have a sense of job achievement Level of satisfaction at the workplace--have a sense of job achievement	4.16 3.33	.831	.899 .985	.000
Pair 6	Motivational Demand of Employees--democratic participation in corporate management Level of satisfaction at the workplace--democratic participation in corporate management	3.62 3.08	.541	1.155 1.065	.000
Total Mean			.7328		

4.4 The Difference between Demand and Satisfaction of Employee Motivation Variables for Training Development

As shown in Table 4, the comparison of p values among all the incentive factors of training development is less than 0.05. This shows that there is a great difference between incentive demands and satisfaction in training development.

From the mean value of the paired difference, the difference of each factor is very similar, basically fluctuating between 0.6 and 1. Furthermore, the two groups of incentives with the largest gap are good opportunities for promotion (0.923) and opportunities for training and learning (0.870), while the group with the smallest gap is a challenging job, with paired difference mean of 0.633.

Table 4: Paired Samples T-Test for Demand and Satisfaction of Training Development

	Training Development	**Mean**	**Paired Differences Mean**	**Std. Deviation**	**Sig. (2-sided)**
	Motivational Demand of Employees-- a good chance of promotion Level of satisfaction at the workplace--a good chance of promotion	4.07 3.14	.923	1.012 1.023	.000
Pair 2	Motivational Demand of Employees--provide good training and learning opportunities Level of satisfaction at the workplace--provide good training and learning opportunities	4.17 3.30	.870	.963 1.023	.000
Pair 3	Motivational Demand of Employees--develop a variety of skills Level of satisfaction at the workplace--develop a variety of skills	4.11 3.25	.855	.954 1.007	.000
Pair 4	Motivational Demand of Employees--a challenging job Level of satisfaction at the workplace--a challenging job	3.87 3.24	.633	1.042 .974	.000
Pair 5	Motivational Demand of employees--good career development space Level of satisfaction at the workplace--good career development space	4.06 3.28	.783	.964 .993	.000
Total Mean			.8128		

4.5 Discussion

The main purpose of the data analysis of this paper is to verify the three hypotheses proposed above. Through the results of difference analysis, it is found that the demand for incentive factors of employees in economic rewards does not match the satisfaction of motivations provided by the private enterprise, so H1 is accepted. For social relationships, employees' incentive demand is higher than employees' incentive satisfaction, so we think H2 is acceptable. Then, similarly, the

P values of the Paired Differences in training development are all less than 0.05, so H3 is acceptable.

Comparing the total mean values of these three types of incentives, the total mean of economic rewards is the largest, which is 1.226, followed by training development (0.8128), and then the smallest is social relationships, with 0.7328. These show that the employees of the enterprise have the lowest satisfaction with the economic rewards, while the satisfaction of training development and social relationships is similar.

For economic rewards, the gap between employees' demand and satisfaction is the biggest.Although economic rewardsare no longer the most effective incentive method, but Lam et al.(2001) think that there is a positive correlation between job satisfaction and economic reward,and theyare the key factors to determine employees' job satisfaction.Malhotra et al. (2007) put forward the similar point of view. Rewards must be best strategically adjusted to achieve organizational goals, improve employees' motivation to better perform their work, and improve job satisfaction.

Employees' needs for trainingdevelopment and social relationships also exceed the satisfaction of the incentives provided by the enterprise. Although many scholars believe that financial reward is the most effective way to motivate employees, however, the study of Sell &Cleal (2011) shows that different psychosocial and work environment variables, such as workplace and social support, have a direct impact on job satisfaction, while the increase in pay does not improve employees' dissatisfaction. Similarly, Lachowski etal.(2018) also pointed out that an important factor in overall job satisfaction is harmonious interpersonal relationships in the workplace, not only between colleagues in similar positions, but most importantly with superiors.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Through the above analysis results, employees are not satisfied with the incentive methods of economic rewards, social relationships and training development, which shows that the enterprise still has a lot of space for development in employee motivation. Further, this paper compares the different incentive needs of employees with the incentive satisfaction provided by theprivate enterprise to understand the specific values of gap between the two. Then, the private enterprise could follow the result to prescribe the right remedy to the case, gradually narrow the gap between demand and satisfaction, and improve employee job satisfaction.

As we all know, employee motivation is an indispensable part of a company, good incentives can not only greatly improve work efficiency but also optimize the work environment (Samiksha, n.d.). Thereby, it has become one of the important tasks of enterprise growth.Here, in order to improve employee satisfaction, I put forward specific measures for these three types of incentives.

5.1 Advice on Economic Rewards

•Set Reasonable Salary Standards

According to the difference analysis, the employees are not satisfied with the salary level provided by the company. Here, the human resources department of the enterprise should fully consider the market competition factors and cost of living factors, thus formulate reasonable salary standards. For example, according to the annual price rise in China, the basic guaranteed wages of employees should be raised accordingly to offset some living stress brought by the rise in prices.

•Implement Different Economic Incentives

We know that the incentive needs of employees with different attributes are different. Because of this situation, the human resources managers should timely and deeply understand the actual needs of the employees and carry on the differential economic incentives to the employees, such as paid holiday and different types of welfare. Here, the human resources department could regularly issue questionnaires to employees in various departments to understand the needs of employees in different periods or creates an email account to encourage employees to send their needs to them.

•Improvement of Wage Assessment Methods

In China, the level of salary and welfare is often determined by the level of the position and the number of working years, but young and less experienced employees are also eager for higher wages. In order to improve the satisfaction of this group of people, working years and position levels should not be the only criteria for salary and bonus growth. The company can increase the role of job performance and adopt the standards recognized by most employees. At the same time, the score gap of performance appraisal should be enlarged properly and the proportion of performance appraisal salary to the total salary of employees should be increased. In this way, employees can feel that their work is equal to the financial return, which further improves the enthusiasm for the work.

5.2 Advice on Social Relationships

•Strengthen the Role of Honor and Praise

From the above analysis results, employees need to be recognized and respected by the leadership, as well as a sense of job achievement, but they are not satisfied with the incentives provided by the company.

Here, the company can express recognition of the work of employees by awarding honors and public praise for their contributions to increase their satisfaction. For example, publicly praise contributors at internal company meetings or bulletin boards and regularly select role models recognized by employees. These methods can not only enhance the sense of pride and achievement of young employees but also create a good working atmosphere to fully mobilize their enthusiasm and better complete their future work.

•Create a Positive Working Environment

An important measure to enhance the positive attitude of employees is to allow employees to participate in the management of the company. For example, leaders of the various department can guide and support employees to participate in varying degrees of company decision-making and company management seminars and adopt the good suggestions put forward by employees. These can not only meet the needs of employees to be respected and self-fulfilling but also enhance their sense of identity and sense of belonging. In addition, the elimination of unfair and discriminatory policies will strengthen the employees' sense of positivity at work and help build harmonious relationships with leaders and colleagues.

5.3 Advice on Training Development

•Design Comprehensive Training Plans

Through the above analysis, it is found that employees' satisfaction with training and learning opportunities is low as well.In order to enhance employees' satisfaction, the specific operational measures are as follows:

Firstly, the company's human resources department needs to understand the needs of trained employees. They can collect the training intention of the staff through the questionnaire survey and determine the training content according to the specific situation of the employees.

Secondly, the human resources sector can use different types of training methods so that training is not limited to classroom-style learning, but also through the network. This allows employees to watch training videos anytime and anywhere.

Finally, the training results need to be evaluated and linked to the employees' salary in order to strengthen the attention of the staff to the enterprise training.

•Optimize the Career Development of Employees

In the training and development, employees are the most dissatisfied with the promotion space provided. In order to improve their satisfaction, the human resources sector should clarify the job system and the way of job development to form a career growth ladder. For example, develop promotion policies for employees and set up assessment programs for different promotion positions. Each employee can participate in the assessment project equally, and employees who have passed the evaluation can be qualified for the position.

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PHILOSOPHY AS A PRACTICE OF A WISE LIFE[1]

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Abstract:*The formation of philosophy as a form of consciousness of its own kind was accompanied by the belief that its creators were some strange people, belonging to a special strain, amiss (atopos), just as their reality in the world of people (atopia). Philosophers have affirmed these qualificatives throughout thehistory of philosophy.They were building their identity through a pure spiritual aspiration to uncover the highest principles of everything that was happening, with an open critical opinion of the existing social reality and a particular way of living.Their existence in the world, characterized by a constant effort to rise above the sphere of everyday life, is a process of a tense state of mind between the set paradigm of a wise life and the attempt to achieve it. This tension manifests itself in the discursive plane through the abstract - speculative reflection about the essential questions of the world and man, and in the existential plane through the constant need to step out of the world of trivial things.Ancient philosophical experience shows that this stepping out entailed contemplation on which not only the most profound theorizing but also the process of self-change was based, through gaining independence from external goods (autarchy) and releasing oneself from passion (ataraxia), which should have ultimately led to the realization of the highest social good.In addition to the contribution of ancient philosophy to building the spiritual and moral integrity of philosophers, this paper actualizes another practical role of philosophy in improving life that has stemmed from the imbalance status of a modern-age individual who is increasingly in need of counseling support from practitioner philosophers for the purpose of stimulating the individual in self-perceiving of problems, establishing a secure thinking base and finding solutions to specific life and professional issues.*

Keywords*: integrity of philosopher; life wisdom; critical consciousness; spiritual exercises.*

Introduction

The changes philosophy faced in its historical course necessarily affected its holders, so we can rightly wonder if there are common qualificatives that make up the essence of philosophy and philosopher, unique to all epochs, i.e.,are the differences that exist between philosophy and philosophers of the ancient world,

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the Middle Ages, the modern and the present agemerely different forms of their appearance with the same philosophical essence?In order to see what their distinction rests upon and how far their differentiation reaches, it is necessary to methodologically distinguish the essential features of philosophy and the way philosophers exist in the world in the broader historical context of their existence.

Ancient philosophers and the wisdom of life

The beginning of ancient Greek philosophy, i.e., its setting apart as a special form of consciousness, was marked by the emergence of the theoretical activity of the mind as a critical - contemplative relation toward the worldfueled by thedisinterested and pure need of the spirit to unravel the last essentials of things using the mind. Although Aristotle (Greek: Αριστοτέλης) classified theorizing as a sublime activity of the mindin the way of life most worthy of man as a rational being, ancient Greek philosophers still saw the ultimate goal of philosophy not in theoretical discourse but in discovering paths that lead to realizing the meaning of existence and achieving a good life.The principle followed by philosophers in their daily existence is in line with Socrates' (Greek: Σωκράτης)view that the best lives are lived by those who seek to become better, and the most pleasant ones are lived by those who notice they get better, meaning that the good life implied cognitive-moral self-change (Ksenofont, 1980: 127).This is the essential feature which the whole philosophy of ancient times was based on as the philosophy of life.

The beginnings of the formation of the identity of philosophers and philosophy can be traced backto Pythagoras (Greek: Πυθαγόρας)and Pythagoreans, who were not only dedicated to discovering the highest laws of cosmic existence, for which they were respected as mathematicians, theorists, and esotericists, but were also especially concerned with establishing and preserving a moral way of life based on observing the akousmata, the rules they themselves had laiddown.The fraternity aimed at not only general education but also exercisetowards perfecting the cognitive powers and moral integrity of personality.Thus, joining the fraternity was contingent on two requirements. One concerned handing over all of one's property, as the path to gaining autarchy, and the other was the vow of silence which, through careful listening, spiritual observation, intense thinking, refraining from premature judgment, should lead to secure knowledge and virtue, especially self-control, by subjecting the will to rational principles. In this type of requirement, Hegel recognized an adequate method of getting into the philosophical way of thinking and the wise way of life as can be seen from his perspective: "We are in the habit of saying that the understanding is cultivated through questioning, objecting and replying, but, in fact, it is not thus formed, but made from without.What is inward in man is by culture got at and developed; hence though he remains silent, he is none the poorer in thought or denser of mind. He rather acquires thereby the power of apprehension, and comes to know that his ideas and objections are valueless; and as he learns that such ideas are valueless, he ceases to have them" (Hegel, 1991:23).For Pythagoreans, refraining from answering was not only practicing attention focused on the problem being studied and which was not discussed before studied in-depth, but also mastering the skill of controlling oneself and developing prudence(Greek: φρόνησῐς)as practical wisdom.Hence silence was not a sign of lack of knowledge, but a process of inner speaking and a way to expand knowledge and gain virtue (Greek: ἀρετή)in theprudent silence of spirit (Živković & Petrović, 2008).This kind of wisdom was also possessed by Heraclitus(Greek: Ηρακλειτος) who, after withdrawing completely from public life in displeasure at the unjust persecution of his friend Hermodor, devoted his entire being to examining nature and himself, writing a scripture which he made non-understandable to anyone who lacked the power of logical thought and purified ethos.That these qualities constituted his philosophical identity is evidenced not only by the work in which, through concise thoughts, he expressed the truth about the cosmos, nature, and man, but also the whole mode of his existence, in line with the highest spiritual and moral principles.This is evidenced by his response to King Darius's invitation to come to his court in Persia to interpret and expose to him the power of wisdom contained in his writings "On Nature“. In his response,Heraclitus says:“All the men that exist in the world, are far removed from truth and just dealings; but they are full of evil foolishness, which leads them to insatiable covetousness and vain-glorious ambition. I, however, forgetting all their worthlessness, and shunning satiety, and who wish to avoid all envy on the part of my countrymen, and all appearance of arrogance, will never come to Persia, since I am quite contented with a little, and live as best suits my own inclination.“ (Laertije, 2005: 382). The supreme goods which Heraclitus holds onto, namely truth and just dealings, are not merely theoretically conceived paradigms which, in their exemplary conceptual form, reside in the ideological sphere of his philosophy.On the contrary, in Heraclitus,they arethe life values that form an integral part of his existential reality.

The passion for exploring truth and living life according to the principles of virtue as two essential elements contained in the notion of philosophers are in a specific way implied in both the character and philosophy of Socrates's life.His overwhelming desire to examine the nature of the cause of things, why they occur, why they exist and why they deteriorate[2]which preoccupied him at a young age, did not abandon him for the rest of his life, except that in adulthood, it was brought down from heaven to earth and turned to the questioning of life and morality, good and evil (Platon, 2015).

Starting from the teleological approach, i.e. by setting good as the purpose of action, Socrates also directed his cognitive method toward ethical knowledge and its practical effectiveness. Hence the basis of his philosophy is the unity of wisdom ofthought and life. He put theequality sign between the truth and acting according to it, because he believed that the knowledge obtained by an individual through the effort of his own thought, and not by passively taking over the learned, could not remain inactive, as the mind as the strongest spiritual power in man strives for his incarnation.So, when asked if he considered the wise those who knew what they should do but did the opposite, he replied: “I hold that *those*who follow the wrong course are *neither wisenor*prudent“ (Ksenofont, 2005: 120).According to Socrates, wisdom was not just about exercising in abstract theorizing or acting in accordance with rules; it involved a unique way of existing that required the spiritual transformation of an individual who has so much self-control that nothing on the outside can disturb the state of his peace of mind.

Such a mode of philosophical thinking and existing was the starting pointof the Stoicists and the Epicureans as well, who affirmed the value of living in the unity of thought preoccupationwith matters of logic, physics and ethics, and in the effort of the spirit to achieve autarchy and ataraxia. The path to autarchy led through mastering one's personal desires, suppressing passions, depriving oneself of the desire to acquire material possessions, getting rid of caring for perishable things, despising money, distinguishing things in our power from those in the power of external forces.Such a value attitude put into life enabled ataraxia, i.e. being free from unnecessary fears, mental anguish, and anxiety with a full sense of spiritual serenity and satisfaction (Ado, 2016).The ideal of the philosopher's life was to attain such a level of inner peace which nothing from the outside could disturb, and the progress toward wisdom was confirmed through returning the soul from everyday worries to the simple joy of living (Ibid. 25)

Insisting on the need and importance of the revitalization of ancient philosophy as a spiritual exercise of self-change, contemporary philosopher Pierre Hadot points to the difference in the interpretation of ancient philosophy as a discourse on philosophy and the interpretation of philosophy as a way of life (Ado, 2011).In the form of theories on cosmology, physics, ontology, and anthropology, it met the pedagogical demands of teaching in the educational system in philosophical schools of the time. However, its ultimate meaning went beyond theoretical reach, in the sense that it was not enough to form theories of right thinking, physical world, and moral action, but it was necessary to think and speak rightly, to contemplate nature, to perceive oneself as an integral part of it, to obey its laws, to develop the skills of a virtuous life, and to exercise practical wisdom.

From analytical to practical competencies

Throughout its history, philosophy has lost the role it had in ancient schools.However, the closure of Plato's Academy did not mean a break with Hellenic philosophical heritage, for it continued to live through the Neo-Platonist schools and later through Aristotelianism in scholastic teachings.In the new age that hinted at the dominance of the religious-theological spirit, philosophy sought new possibilities of existence.At the Universities of Alexandria, Cappadocia, Constantinople, it was studied together with mathematics, rhetoric, grammar, physics, astronomy and other natural sciences and manifested as a kind of a combination of discursive and intuitive consciousness, faith and reason, using rich logical apparatus for the purpose of ontological proving and exegesis of theological dogmas. During its course of a thousand years,medieval philosophy was understood as either external, exoteric, worldly, based on the natural "light of reason"or as internal, esoteric, revealed, inspired by divine logos that transcends human wisdom. (Majorov,1982).All knowledgeabletheologians were mostly philosophically educated as well, which allowed them to interpret religious dogmas in an abstract-speculative way.But in addition to this learned, theological philosophy, the Middle Ages nurtured a philosophy as a form of spiritual asceticism, silent and ascetic life, which, according to Hesychius, achieves a "sweet silence in the heart and a blissful state of mind, free from fantasy" (Dobrotoljublje, 2002: 10).

The new century suppressed the theologization of philosophy and put the development of the scientific-mathematical spirit at the forefront, gradually leading to the scientification of philosophy, which was further strengthened by the demand for its constitution as rigorous science, producing at one point a self-critical attitude towards the meaning of one’s own existence. However, one form of the emergence of philosophy that has its roots in medieval education, and which has not lost its continuity to this day, refers to the form of academic philosophy, i.e. its transfer from the sphere of free philosophizing and spiritual exercise to the space of teaching, university activity.One of the most developed forms of this orientation is analytical philosophy with various disciplinary fields, from philosophy of language to philosophy of science and philosophy of spirit. The most influential philosophers of this orientation belong to deductive theorists known for their rigorous logical-linguistic performances and for their meticulous development of the system of abstract concepts. However, in modern philosophy, apart from philosophers of this orientation, there are those who approach philosophy as wisdom capable of meeting the needs of the deepest human aspirations, eliminating existential fears, and resolving life and moral dilemmas.

One of the new practical competencies that modern philosophers have developed in the face of emerging issues produced by the rapid development of science, medicine, and technology is counseling one, which is realized through two forms of practice. One covers the broad domain of consultative engagement of philosophers within ethical committees as regulatory bodies acting in acounseling capacity for institutions, agencies, and corporations. They take care of protecting their professional interest by introducing ethical oversight and adopting a procedure for regulating moral conduct.This role becomes all the more necessary bearing in mind the general decline tendency of moral credibility, which calls into question the legitimacy of both individual and institutional integrity.The need to engage ethicist philosophers and apply knowledge of ethical theories to address contemporary specific issues has become more and more prevalent. New scientific discoveries backed by sophisticated technology become problematic not in the horizon of their practical realization, but in the domain of their moral justification. In conditions where virtue has not been developed as the bearing moral principle of "ethics of care", codes of ethics become the most effective compensatory mechanism for protecting ethical correctnessand maintaining a balance between personal, company and the broadest social interests.

The other form of philosophers'counseling competence has the character of individual and group philosophical practice, at the heart of which lies the realization of the demand for returning philosophy to real life. Practitioner philosophers argue that engaging in philosophy cannot be reduced to a teaching, lecturing activity existing in the institutional education process, and that its revival and bringing back interest in it can only be achieved if it again confronts the fundamental questions of human existence and becomes an integral part of real life.[3]

Inspired by such thinking, German professor Gerd B. Achenbach abandoned the career of a university professor in Berlin in the 1980s and decided to apply his academic knowledge to counseling work in direct philosophical practice within the "Society for Philosophical Practice" (1982) and the "School of Philosophical Practice."Soon, through the form of the philosopher's counseling role, the movement of applied philosophy spread to the United Kingdom, where Alain de Botton, as a philosophical counselor, founded the "School of Life" in London, while in 1992 Ran Lahav applied philosophical counseling at the University of Haifa in Israel, which he organized through workshops for 15 years.The movement also affected America, where, in 1992, Elliot D. Cohen, Paul Sharkey and Thomas Magnell founded the "National Philosophical Counseling Association", and in 1998, New York University Professor Lou Marinoff founded the "American Philosophical Practitioners Association", which served as a model for the "Serbian Philosophical Practitioners Association".In addition to being engaged in organizations and associations through which they support the application of philosophy as a life-enhancing practice, practitioner philosophers are also involved in publishing highly influential journals, such as "Practical Philosophy" in the UK and "Philosophical Practice" in New York, as well as other works by which they popularize and actualize this philosophical orientation.[4]

For people seeking professional help from psychologists and psychotherapists to solve problems that put them in a state of fear, suffering, anxiety, the emergence of philosophical counselors has brought a whole new approach to perceiving problems, forming attitudes, decision-making in conflict and risk situations and their resolution (Marinof, 2018).Primarily, individuals who have problems of this kind are not treated by philosophical counselors as patients in need of medication therapy or sessions seeking the causes of their condition through the analysis of emotionally experienced frustrations from childhood and subconscious desires; they rather concentrate on the present state and the realistic hypothetical framework of the future. They are approached as healthy individuals

[3]Lahav, R. *Philosophy and Self – Transformation*. http//philopractice.org (Accessed on February 01, 2019.)

[4]Milacic, M. *The Healing Power of Dialogue*.www.etika.edu.rs(Accessed on February 01, 2019.)

who have moral dilemmas regarding family, personal or professional issues, who are anxious, but do not have a more reliable mental stronghold for understanding and solving these problems. Counselors help by conversations through which they reveal the beliefs, value system and moral character of the client and accordingly suggest an approach that could help in self-understanding of the problem and in isolating and classifying its components and implications.In the counseling practice, there is no one general method, but each counselor uses the one that has proven to be most effective in its empirical application.

Lou Marinoff starts from the fact that every man has his own "operational principles" he acts upon, that is, a personal philosophy hefollows in his life. However, it is precisely this personal philosophy that can be the cause of the problem if it is based on misconceptions;therefore it is necessary to first articulate and understand its essence in order for it to become useful and not harmful to its holder (Marinof, 2017: 11). In his counseling work, Lou Marinoff has perfected a practice that includes several stages: 1) problem identification, 2) expressing emotion, 3)analyzing options,4) contemplationand 5) equilibrium. However, he warns that if you adopt a philosophical stance you do not accept at heart, the most you can hope for is some kind of compensation or rationalization of your situation.And this cannot bring you any true and lasting relief (Marinof, 2017:50)An attitude that does not appreciate all the elements of the existing state and the inner world of one's own philosophy can make the situation more difficult. In the counseling process, the counselor should help the client to, as independently as possible, form an adequate attitude, aligned with philosophical wisdom and own mental affinities, so that the application of that attitude can bring inner peace.It is precisely this approach in counseling that helps the individual get to know both the situation and himself, reject what was harmful in his previous life philosophy and reinforce what has proven to be good in order to gain philosophical self-sufficiency, i.e.as much thought independence as possible in approaching life's temptations and maintaining emotional health and moral integrity

Final consideration

In pursuit of the main characteristics that determine the nature and role of a philosopher, we come to two competencies that constitutively determined belonging to this particular "strainof people" in ancient Greece.These are the pursuit of truth and the pursuit of self-change.The way of thinking and the way of life were indeed the determining qualificatives that made them atypical members of society. They found confirmation of their mental nature in theorizing, and confirmation of the meaning and dignity of their own existence in practical action aligned with virtues. Their need for philosophizing stemmed from the belief that the unexamined life is not worth living, and that the highest human goal was constant self-examination and self-development.After the loss of dominant social status and the decades-long search for self in the modern world with doubts about the justification of the meaning of one’s existence, a special orientation of philosophy and philosophers fully aware of the relevance of their practical activity in the world has differentiated itself.

On the basis of the demand for restoring philosophy, practitionerphilosophers stood out who put their academic knowledge, methodical skills and their own experiential experience of the value of philosophy in the service of providing incentives to individualsin preparing them to solve specific life issues independently. However, while we have written testimonies of ancient philosophers stating that they despised money, abstained from anger, cultivated patience, freed themselves from the fear of death by spiritual exercises transposing it into believing in the immortality of the soul, when it comes to contemporary philosophers, apart from the information about the way of theorizing ofanalytically oriented philosophersand the method and results of work of philosophers of practical orientation, we remain deprived of information about the way of their personal existence in the world. We can only assume, at least when it comes to successful practitioners, that they could not properly exercise the counseling role without having deeply lived and directly experienced the benefit and power of philosophical wisdom.

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LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF THE INVOLVEMENT OF THE SUPERFICIALLY UNDERSTOOD PROCEDURES, IN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

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Abstract: *The teaching methodology represents a concern of an important number of publications. This paper reiterates the issue from a curriculum point of view and with highlights of manners of implying the methodology of teaching into the nowadays educational and instructional process.A brief presentation of the place and the role of teaching methodology within the learning situation context is the topic of the first part of the paper. The second part details some considerations about classical and modern teaching methodology focused on learning. These are based on more than twenty-five years of teaching-researching activity within the tertiary education level. A special focus is given for the debates on the lights and shadows of the instructional process, a process done with less explicit guidance or even without it. This part is based as well on a brief presentation of what the specialty literature presents. Final considerations stemming from a long term practice in the educational field on all its levels highlight some ideas about the dangerous effects of exclusive methodological approaches in teaching. A personal opinion is presented. The paper intends to debate an important aspect of educational practice: the tendency to work according to what it is fashionable and not genuinely taking into consideration the real aim of the instructional process: developing effective competencies of the representatives of the new generation, aiming to build a more effective future of human society.The day to day reality shows as being really important for the teaching staff to be concerned about the wrong focuses of the new educational practices.*

Key words: *methodology of teaching; teaching focused on learning; minimal guidance during instruction; inquiry-based-learning; problem solving based learning.*

1. The methodology of teaching as a component of the learning situation

1.1. Defining

The teaching methodology is one of the components of the learning situation, understood as the core element of the curriculum (Niculescu R.M., 2018).

This is a very important structural component as is revealed by the numerous and extended debates, covering the literature of a consistent number of past decades.

The methodology of teaching consists of a set of teaching methods connected to a clear corpus of principles as fundamentals aiming to approach a defined content for being taught to a specific group of students (belonging not only to a certain level of instruction/ grade but to a specific and defined learning context)

1.2. Position of the methodology of teaching within the learning situation structure, seen as a systemic functionality

A timing aspect and an aspect focused on the interconnection among the structural elements are to be considered when talking about the position and the role of the teaching methodology within the learning situation structure.

The expected outcomes (the finalities), expressed nowadays in terms of learners' competencies are the first to be designed because they are milestones into a continuum that builds the human during the ontogenesis process. Each point of this continuum is a final one for the ongoing process of a previous segment and a fundament for the next segment of the ontogenesis process. (Fig.1)

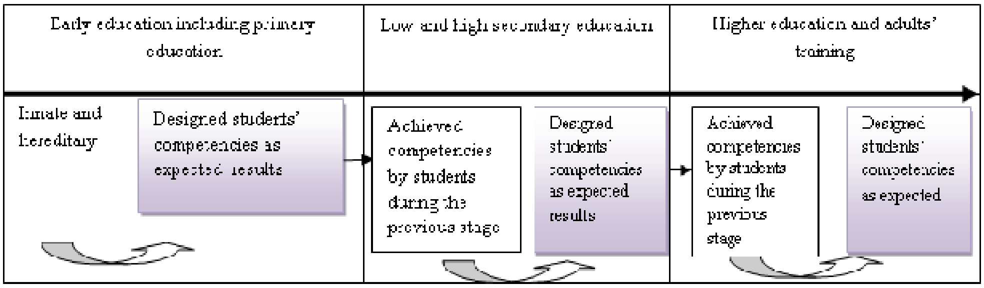


Fig. 1 Evolution of competences as expected outcomes and acquisitions in ontogenesis

The methodology of teaching must be constantly focused on the quality of students' learning not only on the mastery or modernity of methodology itself. This methodology is only one of the main structural components of the learning situation, conceived as the core issue of the curriculum.

The fig. 2 shows the connections between the methodology of teaching focused on learning, with the other main four components of the learning situation and some determinant factors of choosing the adequate methodology of teaching. All these components are systemically connected, meaning that any change at the level of one component has consequences upon all the others.

The methodology of teaching is situated in the middle of the figure not because it is the most important but because it represents the focus of this presentation. First, in terms of time, the process of designing the teaching process starts with the establishment of the expected outcomes (results) of the process targeted by the design of the respective sequence (lesson, unit of learning, set of learning units, etc.).

The contents are, generically speaking are established by the national curriculum and the yearly teaching plan for each curricular area or subject. The specific content, connected intimately to the expected outcomes as finalities, can vary as long as they aim and lead to the development of the established competencies. The limits of variability are established in connection to the students' specificity and the particularity of the learning context. The time of teaching is also somehow predetermined by the national curriculum as a framework. But the particular design of this teaching-time connected to specific contents is also a teacher's responsibility.

The teacher is in charge of the selection of this content taking into account the students' interests, their level of knowledge and other contextual aspects (for example available teaching materials).

The content must be taught with the highest efficiency for a very concrete group of students, with their own level of intellectual, social, and emotional level of development, within a concrete school, with very specific features itself: material, social, psychological. That is why the chosen of the adequate teaching methodology is entirely the teachers' concern and it depends on their commitment to their work, and on their correct understanding of their professional mission. This mission is essentially expressed by the development of appropriate students' competencies for a determined society.

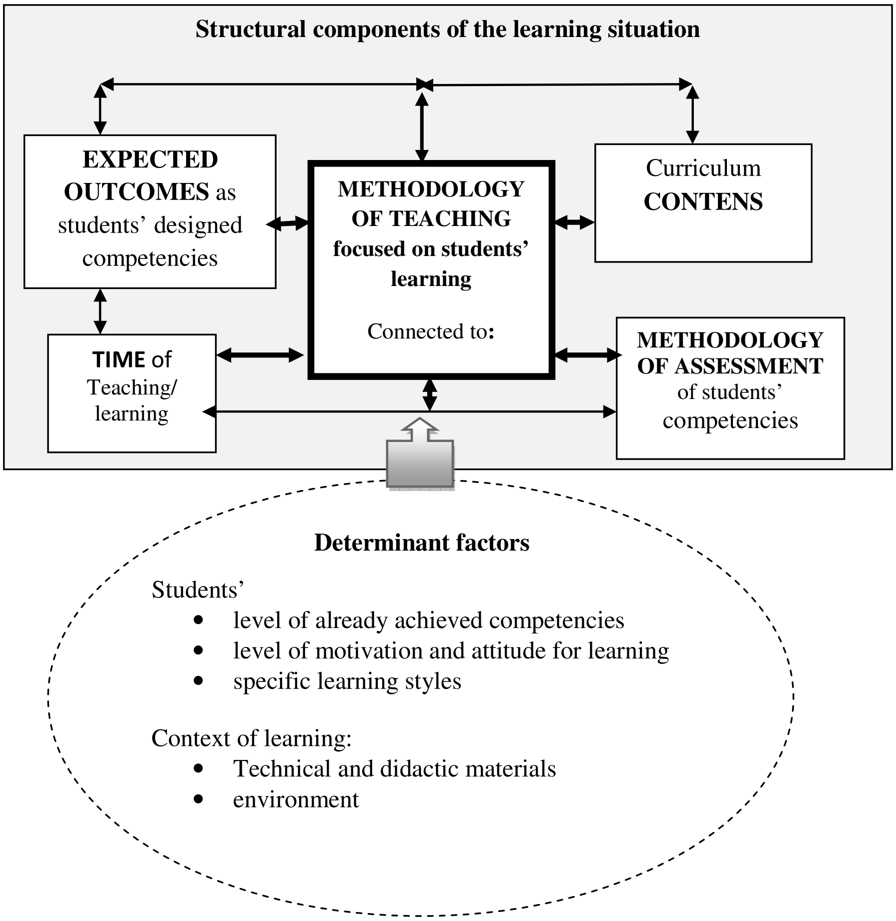


Fig. 2. The place and the determinants of methodology of teaching within the learning situation context

The teaching methodology must entirely connect to the designed methodology of students' competencies assessment. The teaching style must be adequate for the assessment style. For example, a very open teaching style focused on learning by doing, or by inquiring/ discovering cannot be connected to an assessment focused on memorizing without disastrous effects. The vice versa situation is also true: a student cannot cope with a final assessment based on inquiry and creativity as long as all the teaching process was focused only on informing.

Finally, this teaching methodology selected for certain content, addressed to very specific students, leads to the assessment of the level of achievement of the expected outcomes- the designed students' competencies, using designed assessment methodology. Thus, the designing process starts with the design of students expected competencies to be developed, and end with the assessment of the level of these competencies achievement.

1.3. The methodology of teaching - determinant factor of the learning style

The moment of designing the teaching process, including the choice of the teaching methodology, must be preceded by an in-depth scrutinizing of the concrete students' learning styles.

A new analysis should follow, after the students' assessment. This should be focused on the degree of appropriateness of the selection of the teaching methodology connected to obtain the expected outcomes. The teacher is involved in an ongoing reflective process being constantly focused on the efficiency of the students training.

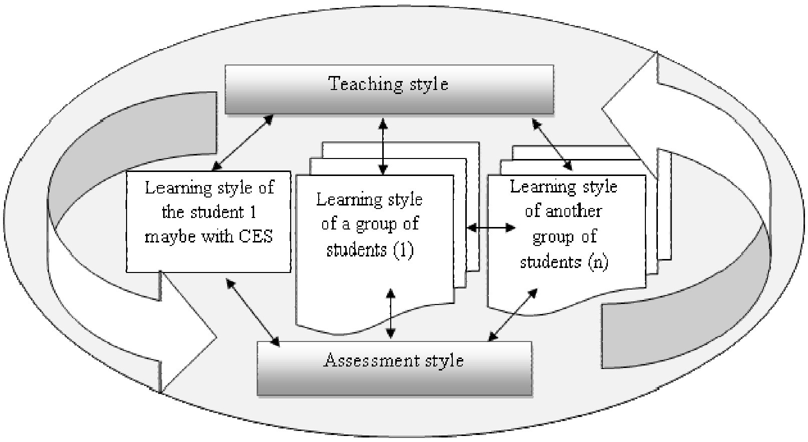


Fig. 3. Interconnections among the teachers' learning and assessment styles and the students learning styles

1.4. The students' learning process in the intersection point of the cognitive, emotional, affective plans

There is still a hidden, unaccepted but the real misconception about the learning process that would involve only the cognitive aspects. It is true that the main plan is a cognitive one, even if the nature of the behavior involved can belong to other areas (motor, social, etc.). But, no matter to what field the learned behaviors belong, the fuel of the learning process is represented by motivation and emotions. This aspect seems to be underestimated by teachers, even if as a statement they seem to be concerned about it.

The last decades brought a new trend in education a dangerous trend which stresses exactly this necessity to take into account the motivational and emotional aspects but with its shadowed part and with perverse effects.

These two fields, with an important role as fuels, must be managed according to the psychological specificity of each stage of ontogenesis.

The total freedom of the child cannot be considered a sacrosanct rule at the ages when the child is not psychologically capable to manage this freedom.

The early education should stress the freedom of children, in terms of letting them and their educators find out what they like and dislike, what they can at a higher level of performance according to the age and what field asks more effort to be approached; but this does not mean that the rule of the "I do only what I wantl" should governate this stage of education.

The kindergarten and the primary school have to develop an instrumental culture for children, but I consider with equal importance, the development of their wish to learn. This is possible only if the educational process uses a methodology of teaching able to develop positive emotion and the intellectual curiosity accompanying the learning process. The main aim must be to prepare future teens for a learning process that involve effort and dedication.

The cognitive development of students should be stressed at the low and high secondary school levels should in order to put strong bases for a genuine general culture. Further, the higher (tertiary) education level aims to strengthen an effective specialty culture. This trajectory is possible only if the cognitive process of learning is accompanied by adequate motivation and will, and it is supported by positive emotions (including the intellectual ones like curiosity for knowing is)

2. Classical and modern in teaching methodology focused on learning

2.1. General considerations

A great debate is to be found in the literature about how it is suitable to teach. A lot of trends came in waves of fashion, each moment of the last decades, exhibiting strong criticism to the previous ones.

Sometimes, the well known saying according to which “because of the trees the forest is forgotten” seems to rule the field of education. The extreme approaches become "over the night, uncontested queens”, and everything else is considered wrong or obsolete. Groups of reformers introduce new methodological approaches, create procedures, and the rest of the teaching staff, too often only for obeying, apply these procedures without an in-depth understanding of what they aim, or what they mean.

An analysis of these trends could cover a number of many pages. But for the reasons for arguing the general idea previously presented, only one of the new trends we'll be put under the scrutinizing process.

2.2. The Minimal Guidance During Instruction with its versions, a new trend. Lights and shadows of not-enough understood procedures

Nowadays, along the second decade of the third millennium, the educational process implied in the systems of many countries strongly values the so-called inquiry learning or learning focused on problem-solving, etc. all belonging to the idea of minimal guidance during instruction accompanied by a high level of students' freedom.

This trend appears intimately connected to the curriculum philosophy that strengthens the necessity to develop students' competencies not only to enrich their mind with the knowledge that is perishable per se.

The dynamic of knowledge, which is amazing nowadays, and easy to be perceived by anyone, justify this philosophy. It seems to be obvious that the humans of the future must have the *competence* to keep themselves updated, by being able to be informed (self-informed) promptly, to process information in relation to the task required to be resolved and even to be able to foresee possible unexpected tasks for the future. These cognitive strategies, applied for nowadays problem-solving situations, accompanied by effective cognitive strategies to explore the future there became firm demands of daily life. They cannot be developed during the educational process, and put into practice in real life without the development of the correspondent emotions, motivation, and will of those who learn. The sets of cognitive strategies thus described need strong, specific fuel, which is why emotional development, cognitive feelings, and especially the ability to engage in a voluntary effort become essential.

One of the methodological approaches offered by specialists is that of inquiry-based learning. It implies an open learning process, mastery managed, with the clear aim to determine the development of a high level of critical thinking (Berg, C A R; Bergendahl, V C B; Lundberg, B K S; Tibell, L A E (2003); Jump up to:a b Zion, M.; Sadeh, I. (2007).

Together with a remarkable number of specialists, I stress the idea that the inquiry-based learning implied within the educational practice has determined evident positive effects but it had shadows and side-negative effects. These side-negative effects appear when the use of these types of strategies is done as a set *of procedures* (officially requested or simply on fashion) without an in-depth understanding of its connection to:

- the psychological age of the learners;
- the specific and the place of content within a logical context.

A clear understanding of the educational/formative role of these procedures must be expected and made possible. A pre-training of those who implement procedures appears strictly necessary.

Some supporters of this way of learning stress the idea that open learning shouldn't necessarily be designed targets or definitely expected results. The learners are supposed to be put in the situation to work with given materials in determined circumstances with the aim of helping them to use the information in order to create meanings. Hannafin, M., Land, S., Oliver, K. (1999).

With different nuances this idea is presented by other authors; the presentation of a defined outcome of the inquiry-based learning approach is one of the existing variables with a number of benefits stressed by different authors. (Zion, M.; Sadeh, I. (2007). These benefits, however, depend on the way the teachers are skilled to use the methodology of inquiry-based learning according to the age of the learners, the focus of learning process, the specificity of the content and the place of a given content at the beginning or later in its approach.

In fact, the core issue appears to be the way of understanding the impact of instructional guidance during teaching, which has determined stong disputes for more than at least the past half-century, starting with; Craig, 1956; Mayer, 2004 Ausubel, 1964; Shulman & Keisler, 1966 (quoted by Paul A. Kirschner , John Sweller & Richard E. Clark , 2006). There are presented opinion that the learning process is more productive and efficient in a less or unguided learning situation context.

The learning situations are not conceived with the role to present information to the learners but to offer only essential data with the aim of determining the learners to find/ discover or construct by themselves other important information. This approach "has been called by various names including discovery learning (Anthony, 1973; Bruner, 1961); problem-based learning (PBL; Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980; Schmidt, 1983), inquiry learning (Papert,1980; Rutherford, 1964), experiential learning (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 1985; Kolb & Fry, 1975), and constructivist learning (Jonassen, 1991; Steffe & Gale, 1995)" all quoted by Paul A. Kirschner , John Sweller & Richard E. Clark , 2006:75.

There are authors that consider as inappropriate the unguided or less guided learning approach, especially but not exclusively for the " novice learners which should be provided with direct instructional guidance on the concepts and procedures required by a particular discipline and should not be left to discover those procedures by themselves (e.g., Cronbach & Snow, 1977; Klahr & Nigam, 2004; Mayer, 2004; Shulman & Keisler, 1966; Sweller, 2003)" as quoted Paul A. Kirschner , John Sweller & Richard E. Clark , 2006:75.

In their argument, the authors are anchored in human cognitive architecture which cannot be ignored, with special attention for the constructivism and its contribution for supporting the necessity of a less guided learning (e.g., Steffe & Gale, 1995).

Argues and counter-argues are presented by the mentioned material, and research focused on comparing guided and unguided instruction is accompanied by interesting examples and models. All this presentation leads the authors to conclusions that are not favorable to the approaches stated under the principle of proclaiming the superiority of the student's freedom in learning.

In my opinion, it is difficult to adopt or to reject in a very definite way an approach or another.

An effective learning process addresses both to the mind and the soul of the learner. A human is not a computer, a non-human to be pre-loaded with definite procedures, having even for combining procedures among them with the aim to produce new ones. The humans are humans first of all with up and downs in their development, with a more and more difficult possibility and ability to adapt them to a world with a dynamics like a tornado.

Declaratively, the current educational process in the world is placed under the sign of freedom in learning but understood freedom without any relation to the ages of those who are learners and with their possibility to understand the concept of freedom itself.

It seems to be an erroneous manner to take into account the motivational and emotional components of competencies, both melted into the attitudes with a directional and energizing role for the operational components with a main cognitive substance.

The nowadays context of the instructional process only pretend to take into account these aspects, and this pretending attitude has an extremely negative impact both on learners and their educators.

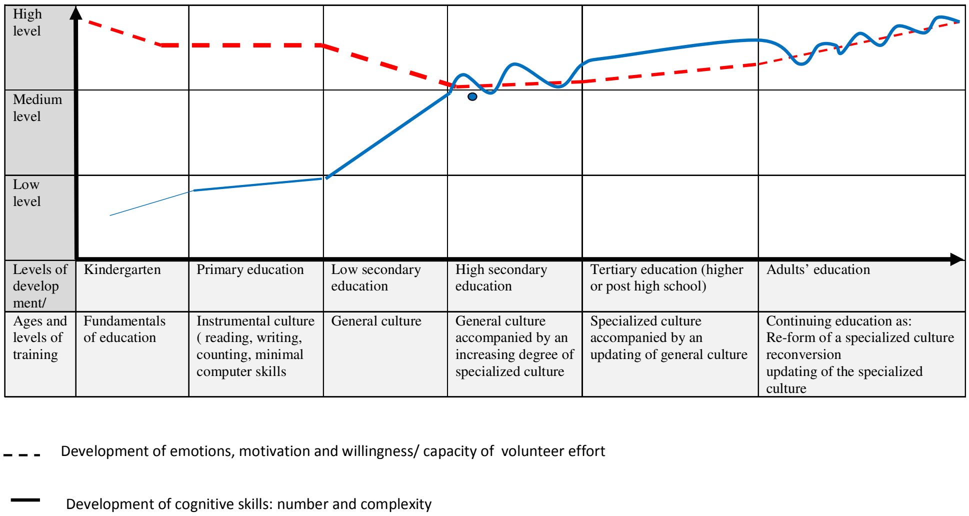
The human mind must develop uniquely at the level of each individual, by maximizing the potential of the individual, by gradually clarifying the path he wants and can follow in life. For this purpose a harmonious interweaving of what the needs of Mind during its development, with what the emotions and the motivation can sustain, becomes tremendously necessary. Only in this way is possible to trigger without reservations the voluntary effort when obstacles appear.

Truth should be emphasized: working according to the fashion in education, the idealization of what is considered modern and the total rejection of what is considered obsolete represent a real danger. The choice in teaching methodology is not determined by fashion or pre-judgments but by what it is to be obtained and by the specific of the learners and of the learning context. The importance is of the result (the final point of the educational trip, no matter what sequence), and not the way and the chosen of a classic or modern vehicle, especially when the driver has not skilled to effective drive it.

2.4. Final considerations with strong roots in educational practice

Reflecting on these long and eventually interesting debates, after an entire professional life in education, with direct experience, with teaching and managerial tasks, from pre-school education to adults' education and going through all the intermediate levels, I can present my opinion using the following figure with its brief explanation (Fig. 4). This intends to be an invitation for all the interested readers or practitioners genuine reflection with special focus on their own level of expertise obtained by experience.

Fig. 4 Harmony between the operational and the directional components of competencies



If one considers two aspects: development of emotions, motivation, and willingness/ capacity of volunteer effort as fundamentals of attitudes towards of learning on one side, and the development of cognitive skills on the other side, it is important to be understood two aspects.

First, the trajectories of the evolution of these two aspects are different and their interconnection is more and more intimate and unique for each person with age even if the humans go through the same system of formal education.

The interconnection of these two components of competencies, as operational elements (cognitive skills, with their fundamentals in knowledge) and directional aspects (attitudes based on motivation, emotion, and willingness) leads step by step to the development of more complex and effective competencies.

Each age develops (by early education in family and by formal education later) what it is necessary to be developed:

- fundamentals of knowing and feeling during the early years
- instrumental culture in pre-school and primary education (consisting of reading, writing, counting, using minimal computer skills, and being motivated, liking and willing to do all these)
- general culture as leading "actor", with more and more important second actors expressed by the specialized culture during low secondary school and high school; these involve both the operational and attitudinal components of competencies.
- specialized culture on defined and higher degrees in tertiary education level (higher education or post-high education) with a specific and intimate connection between the two already mentioned components of competencies.

- an interesting development of specialized culture and nuanced development of general culture when the adult works already within a practical field; now another interesting inter-connection can be detected between cognition on one side, and the motivation and emotions, on the other side, both combined in dynamic attitudes.

Thus, for the babies and toddlers, it is important to be stimulated cognitively, emotionally, socially according to their age and their own potential. The maximal stimulation with strong emotional support is the keyword at this age. It is not really important what they learn but there are some knowledge and skills important for their autonomy, interrelation with the others that are to be taken seriously into account. The way of effective communication is a milestone at this age.

The stage of pre-school education should be focused on developing more and more at a high level the emotional, motivational and willingness components, because the age is favorable for, and they will be the adequate fuel for all the future life as learners. The cognitive skills are not, in my opinion, the leading actors at this age; indubitable they must be developed, they have their importance but for cognition to becoming later a leading actor now, it is necessary to try to put Cognition in a secondary role for Oscar .

During the low secondary education, the directional component of competence can low its level of focus from the educational manager point of view (without being neglected at all), while the cognitive operational component will become more and more developed. Their harmony is to be built in high school and tertiary education and it is an intimate and balanced during the adult's education.

It seems to be simple to ensure this dance of coordination between these two components but an effective result needs mastery management from the educational staff side.

The first condition is to manifest a genuine concern for education and its results. These results have a genuine important effect on the future evolution of human society.

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FINANCING EDUCATION: A ROUTE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF A COUNTRY

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Abstract: *Everybody knows that education is the backbone of a nation. The countries which have realized that motto and invested a lot for a long time for sustainable development of the education sector of the country, they are now forerunner in innovation, world influence, employment, innovative thinking, world-class health care service, technology, ideological influence and even military advancement. They have diversified education investments which have had defused the progress in all sectors. On the contrary, there are many countries which are wealthier than many developed countries, but for creative ideas, educational advancement, climate change and even for major decisions, they rely on some specific advanced countries. These countries cannot ensure sustainable development of their own as they rely on others. Besides, some countries mostly depend on natural resources which are now facing constraint for plummeting of the price of those assets due to worldwide economic depression or the invention of alternative option. The countries which have the best education in the world, they have more researchers and diversified world-class education system and creativities to cope up with the changing world circumstances. Therefore, education financing opens up a variety of employment opportunities which leads to the reduction of the crime rate of a country—consequently, leads to* the sustainable economic development of a nation.

Keywords: *Education financing; history of education investment; strong economy; quality of education; diversified investment.*

Introduction

Education is not stagnant; it is diverse and ever-changing. Education changes the view of schooling and the concept of anything or any issue.

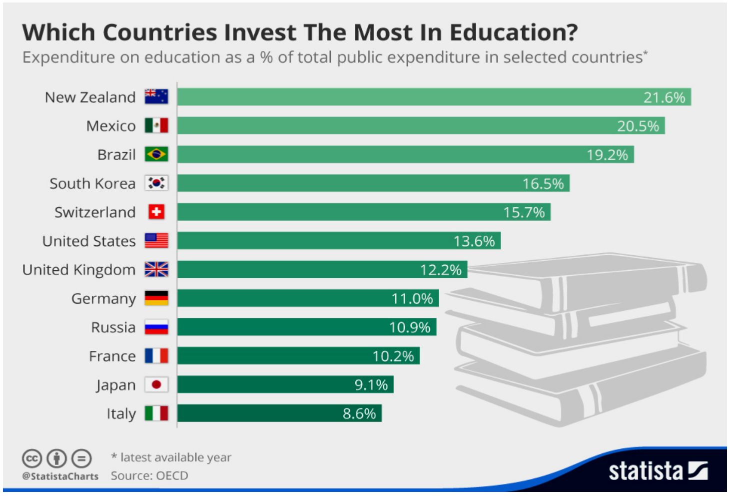
Proper education and educating people with the updated edification are connected with the development of a society and obviously a country. Regarding the development of a country or society, Mercan and Sezer (2014) say that differences in education level are one of the main reasons for economic performance differences between developed and developing countries. To keep the education level up-to-date, educational financing is very important for a nation-state. Becker (1962) treated education financing as capital investment. Educational investment helps a society not only to educate its people but also to contribute to the overall progress of its citizens and social changes. Better-educated people are thought to form more accurate expectations and pursue their aspirations more efficiently than poorly educated people (Vila, 2005). Wha (2014) also talks in the same way; he says that Education is a fundamental driver of personal, national and global development. He also articulates that the educational expense of a country is interconnected with economic development. Countries with higher per capita income…invest more in children's education. The…efforts to promote more inclusive economic growth and improve education systems can raise enrollment among young people in developing countries and reduce disparities between genders and among social groups.

Therefore, in this article the researcher intends to clarify that education investment does not mean developing infrastructure, using updated technology, filling the university library with outdated and useless books, buying expensive devices just for good world ranking of the university, but planning sector-wise educational investment, launching time-oriented new courses for all levels of education, training teachers properly based on the quality of students and teaching environment, making availability of latest most important books in the library, and making government scholarships to highly qualified post-graduate student for studying abroad with the assurance of their return to their native land.

Importance of education investment for a country

Education investment works as a catalyst for preparing next generation efficiently for the economic, social and cultural development of a country. Economists consider that the time and money invested in education pay returns and that these have a positive net effect on the possibilities of satisfying human needs (Vila, 2005). Developed countries finance more on education specifically on education research. Regarding education investment, Barshay in 2017 in a newspaper article wrote that "the world's developed nations are placing a big bet on education investments, wagering that highly educated populaces will be needed to fill tomorrow's jobs, drive healthy economies and generate enough tax receipts to support government services." All countries have increased their education financing remarkably recently. For instance, over ... 2010 to 2014 period, education spending, on average, rose 5 percent per student across the 35 countries in the OECD (The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). In some countries, it rose at a much higher rate. For example, between 2008 and 2014, education spending rose 76 percent in Turkey, 36 percent in Israel, 32 percent in the United Kingdom and 27 percent in Portugal (ibid).

The interesting factor is that though the education budget within the mentioned time frame was squeezed in the USA, there per primary and secondary school allocation is higher than all countries. Barshay (2017) also talked about this issue in her newspaper column. She wrote that "even with the decline in spending, the United States still spends more per student than most countries. The United States spent $11,319 per elementary school student in 2014, compared with the OECD average of $8,733, and $12,995 educating each high school student, compared with an average of $10,106 per student across the OECD". In contrast, the opposite circumstance prevails in the Middle-East countries. According to Statista (MacCarthy, 2015), within the first twelve highly education invested countries, there is no country from the Middle East, though there are some countries in this region which are among the richest countries in the world.



Source: https://www.statista.com/chart/3398/which-countries-invest-the-most-in-education/

Middle-East countries mainly focus more on tertiary education than school education which is more important for giving students a solid basic education. This wrong step has a derogatory influence on the confidence, enthusiasm, encouragement and required knowledge on a subject to study at the university level, as they find a big difference between school education system and university education structure. According to the information on Education Performance Index (EPI) provided by Akkari (2004) that despite their financial resources, several countries in the Middle East have been unable … to convert national wealth into extended opportunities for basic education … Among the bad performers are Kuwait (54 places lower), Saudi Arabia (48 places lower), Qatar (38 places lower), and Oman (36 places lower).

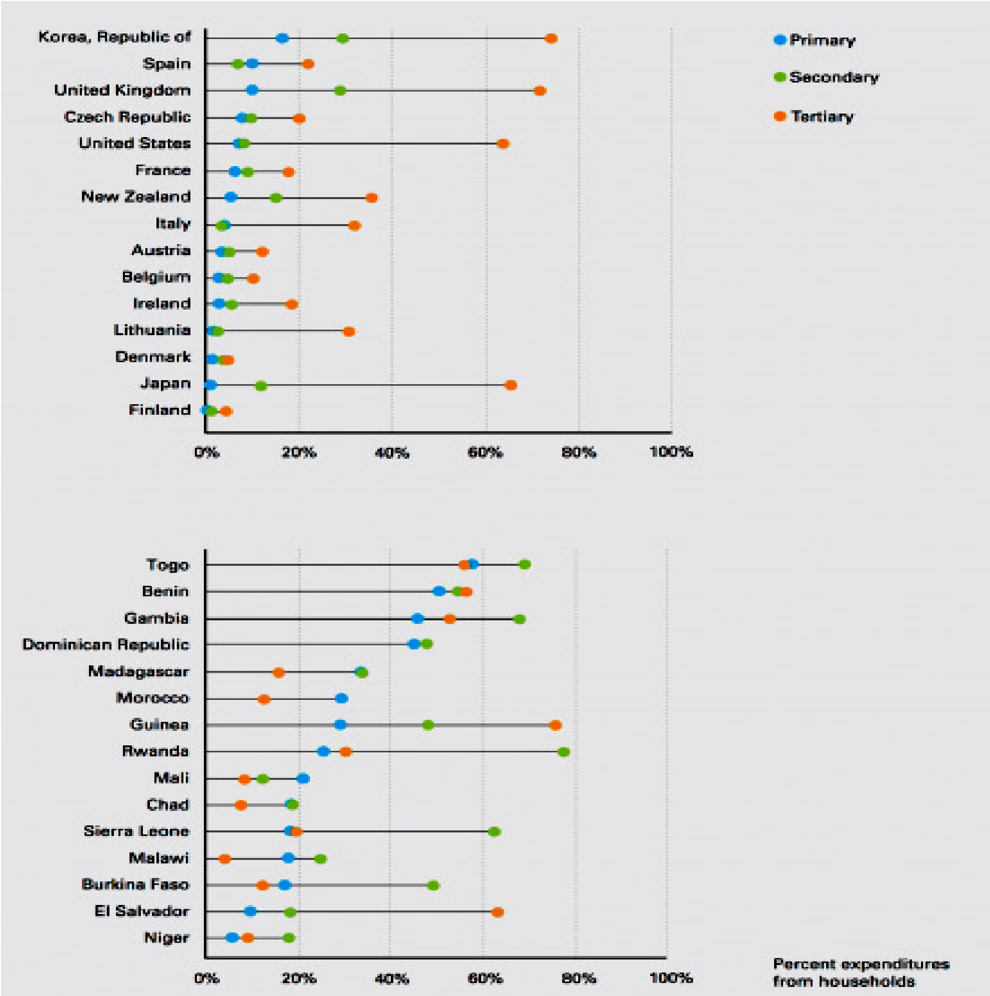
History of education investment of some countries

Akkari (2004) says that during the second half of the twentieth century, education has been taken very much as an investment in human capital, with long-term benefits both to the individual who is educated and to the public at large.

Primarily, it is seen in all countries that government financing is the main sound of the fund in educational development and expansion. During the time of the industrial revolution, 1750-1990, the leading manufacturing countries in the world were the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Russia, Italy, the United States, and Japan. Among the above-mentioned countries, funding of education relied on local, state and federal funding. After the industrial revolution during the years of 1950-70 in America, there was a substantial growth of educational expenditure (Roser and Ospina, n.d.). On the other hand, in case of France: education spending was initially low and mainly private, then in 1833 funding began growing with local resources after the introduction of a law liberating communes to raise more local taxes for schools, and finally in 1881 the national government took over most of the financial responsibility after the introduction of a new law that abolished all fees and tuition charges in public elementary schools (Roser and Ospina, n.d.).

Apparently, it is thought that North American and European countries every fiscal year have a big budget than other countries. However, World Bank data (2010) reveals that European countries spend more on secondary and tertiary education rather than primary education; they invest more on pre-primary education to make the basis of students solid (Education at a Glance, 2015). Publicly funded pre-primary education tends to be more strongly developed in the European than the non-European countries of the OECD (ibid). It is also experienced by teachers in Middle East countries that due to lack of quality education at the primary school level, students struggle to cope up with the education system at the tertiary level. If the basic education of the students is not ensured, it is quite difficult to expect a productive outcome from them at the tertiary level.

It is also revealed in the writing of Roser and Ospina (n.d.) that "the percentage of total education expenditures contributed directly by households in 15 high-income countries and 15 low/middle-income countries". The chart below also proves that both the government and citizens of a country should take the responsibility of educational financing rather than fully relying on the public fund.



Percentage of total education expenditures contributed directly by households in 30 countries, grouped by country income – Figure 32 in The Investment Case for Education and Equity (UNICEF - 2015) Source: Roser & Ospina (n.d)

Comparing wealth of countries with education research

According to the *Global Finance* magazine, in 2018, within the top 30 richest countries in the world, 11 countries were from Asia, 16 from Europe, two from North America and one from Australia. Within 11 Asian countries, six are from the Middle East region.

The first 30 richest countries which are mentioned in the *Global Finance* magazine, according to the statistics of UNESCO Institute of Statistics (n.d.), there is no data on Macao, Hong Kong, and Taiwan as they are autonomous regions of China. Excluding them, Qatar, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam, United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, and Oman are from Asia. The interesting factor is that except Singapore, all other richest countries from Asia spend less than 1% of their GDP for research and development (R&D) and there are less than 605 researchers per million inhabitants. In contrast, countries which are comprised within North America, Europe and Oceania regions, except Malta, other seventeen countries invest more than 1.3% of their annual GDP for R&D. Besides, among per million inhabitants of those seventeen countries, more than 4233 people are researchers.

It is explicit in the aforementioned data that regarding R&D, Asian countries are far behind the countries of other regions; even economically bailed out Greece has more investment in researcher, and the number of researchers is more than most of the Asian richest countries. That means Asian countries should focus on R&D for stable economic and educational advancement.

On the other hand, in the current globalized world, technology plays a big role in R&D for communication and availing information, so an efficient workforce is needed for utilizing technology. With reference to ameliorating updated technology and R&D, Vila (2005) says that "technology is generated through the investment in R&D activities, which, in turn, require intensive use of highly educated labour. Hence, higher education influences economic growth not only directly, but also indirectly through the generation and assimilation of new technology".

Relationship between quality of education and economic growth

After the starting of the industrial revolution in 1750, it has been seen that the present leading developed countries like United Kingdom, USA, Japan, Germany, Russia, Italy, etc. invested a lot for the progress of education sector as this funding was connected with the efficiency of labors at that time.

In 1993, total expenditures on education institutions in the United States were 4.2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) for the primary-secondary grade level, 2.5 percent for higher education, and 6.8 percent for all levels combined. While Canada and France spent a larger fraction for primary-secondary education, of the G-7 countries, only Canada spent a larger fraction than the United States for higher education and for all levels combined (International comparisons, 1997).

Currently, also the educational investment of developed countries is obviously higher than in other countries.

However, a huge amount of educational investment cannot assure quality education, for instance, despite Middle East countries having higher educational investment and education budget every year, for the worldwide advancement of the education sector, they have a little contribution. Here, a deliberate plan, focused educational expenses and effectiveness of prevalent educational system play decisive roles. Supporting this issue Mercan and Sezer (2014) points out that

The performance of a country in the development process is closely related to the effectiveness of the educational system. Besides its several positive contributions in social, cultural and political areas, an effective education system increases the competitiveness and contributes to the economic growth by training the qualified labour and productivity increase in economical aspects.

The most important advantage of developed countries is that they have the capacity for the well educated and qualified labor keeping pace with the rapid changes in the manufacturing process and producing high technology. The improvements in educational level affect the economic growth positively by increasing both the labour productivity and the capacity of knowledge production.

Connection between the quality of education with world rankings of countries

Education quality of a country has a significant reflection on the overall ranking of a country. Both of them are almost close. For example, according to the information of *U.S. News & World Report* 2018 on education ranking, among the top 30 countries, there are 22 countries from Europe, two from North America, two from Oceania and four from Asian regions. It is almost reflected in other sectors. The following table indicates this:

Serial	Name of the country	Education Ranking	Overall Ranking	International Influence	Forward Thinking
1	United Kingdom	1	5	4	9
2	United States	2	8	1	3
3	Canada	3	3	10	8
4	Germany	4	4	5	6
5	France	5	10	6	18
6	Australia	6	7	17	11
7	Switzerland	7	1	16	7
8	Sweden	8	6	22	10
9	Japan	9	8	7	1
10	Nederlands	10	11	21	13
11	Denmark	11	10	29	14
12	Norway	12	14	25	12
13	New Zealand	13	12	31	19
14	Belgium	14	Not ranked	19	20
15	Finland	15	16	35	17
16	Italy	16	15	9	23
17	Ireland	17	16	30	27
18	Spain	18	20	11	26
19	Luxembourg	19	19	36	25
20	Singapore	20	16	28	2
21	South Korea	21	22	13	4
22	Russia	22	26	2	21

23	Israel	23	30	8	22
24	Portugal	24	24	24	32
25	China	25	20	3	5
26	Poland	26	27	38	30
27	Greece	27	29	18	54
28	Hungary	28	38	48	49
29	Czech Republic	29	26	46	56
30	Argentina	30	40	39	41

Source: https://www.usnews.com/news/best-countries/best-education

Among the top 30 educationally ranked countries in the world, 93.33% (29 countries; excluding Belgium) of these countries are within the top 30 overall ranked countries. In addition, 76.67% (23 countries) of the above-mentioned countries are the top 30 most influential countries in the world. Furthermore, 83.33% (25 countries) of these countries are also top 30 forward thinking countries. It is clear from the above table that the countries which have the best education in the world, they are advanced in thinking, influence and overall ranking also. Therefore, education investment is the best way for the advancement of a country. Education has an impact on social, cultural, innovation and even quality of life also. If a generation is educated properly with proper education financing, it has a positive effect on the next generations also. Vila (2015) says that evidence of the effects of parents' education on children's health; cognitive development and social behaviour can be found.

Positive side of more education investment

If we observe the developed countries in the world which have more money flow in the education sector; they have less crime rate comparatively, at least, people lead a decent life. More schooling means more possibility to get a job which leads to less criminal activity. About this Vila (2015) states that greater education investment is related to a greater stability of social structures. School helps children to understand societal values and encourages them to behave in socially acceptable ways, so educated individuals are expected to be more civilized and tolerant to others. Educated communities are generally more stable and less likely to experience violent social conflicts than societies with a less educated population.

This atmosphere prevails in countries like Finland, Canada, Norway, Denmark, Switzerland, Sweden, etc. If we look at the rating of unemployment of the countries which are mentioned in *U.S. News & World Report* 2018, it will be understandable.

Serial	Name of the country	Unemployment rate with ranking (%)
1	United Kingdom	4.4% (155)
2	United States	4.4% (154)
3	Canada	6.5% (125)
4	Germany	3.8% (172)
5	France	9.5% (85)
6	Australia	5.6% (137)
7	Switzerland	3% (181)
8	Sweden	6.6% (123)
9	Japan	2.9% (183)
10	Nederlands	5.1% (146)
11	Denmark	5.8% (136)
12	Norway	4% (170)
13	New Zealand	4.9% (149)
14	Belgium	7.5% (111)
15	Finland	8.7% (97)
16	Italy	11.4% (71)
17	Ireland	6.4% (129)
18	Spain	17.1% (41)
19	Luxembourg	5.9% (134)
20	Singapore	2.2% (198)
21	South Korea	3.8% (171)
22	Russia	5.5% (139)
23	Israel	4.3% (158)
24	Portugal	9.7% (83)
25	China	4% (167)
26	Poland	4.8% (151)
27	Greece	22.3% (30)
28	Hungary	4.4% (157)
29	Czech Republic	2.8% (184)
30	Argentina	8.1% (106)

Source:
https://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/Unemployment_rate/

The aforementioned table demonstrates that among the top education ranked countries in the world, only two countries (6.67%) are below 50 most unemployed countries in the world. Another two countries (6.67%) are within 51-99 groups. Most significantly, 86.67% of countries are ranked 106 and above. It illustrates that if the education sector of a country has sufficient funding for a long period of time and the quality of education can be assured, it impulses positive impact on other areas also. If the unemployment rate of a country declines, the crime rate will also be reduced. If the crime rate is controlled then obviously the law and order situation of a country will be stable. The outcome of all positive sides will be extradited to the expansion of the economy of the country.

Disseminate Educational Investment

Education investment should be diversified for balancing educational development because it has impact on sector-wise steady economic growth. It should cover junior, secondary and tertiary education, as well as medical science, technological, mechanical, scientific and social education. All of them should be connected with overall social, environmental and cultural development. Besides, all these progresses are to be updated time to time with the global needs.

Diversified educational investment will also cover domestic and international market needs. It can be patronized by government and non-government organizations which are connected with the economic and education goals of a country. The result of the educational financing may be reflected within few years or decades. Regarding this point, Emily Hu talks about educational investment to ensure quality education in USA. He says that “the well-established standards and respected education quality evaluation systems in the United States being the key to its world leading position in the K-12 education industry and its capacity to utilize diversified investments in the sector” (China, 2016)

Diversified educational investment and inter-disciplinary education will also reduce the economic risk. China has taken initiatives to produce multi-disciplinary talents. According to Mr. Tan, developing excellent inter-disciplinary talents is the top priority [of china] and the key to allow the widest range of quality social resources to flow into the education field and to promote education innovation (China, 2016).

Recommendations

Since the quality of education, development and influence of the country works simultaneously, following steps should be followed before thinking about education investment:

•Quality of education does not mean the flow of money; if it could be, the countries which are blessed with natural resources, they would have the best schools, universities, research institutes and researchers. Following points should be well thought-out before financing: enthusiasm, research environment, research fund, transparency, investment of money ascertaining loopholes of the education system, profound knowledge of the current world circumstance, the efficacy of using latest technology rather than buying them just for show-off, development strategy and long term vision of the country should be kept in mind before financing education sector.

•Basically, the advantage of education investment finally reaches to the students. So, a hardworking, connoisseur, curious and talented generation should be created to get the optimistic end result of this backing.

•The policy makers of a country should consider that it is a long term investment; it may take few decades to get see the outcome of this funding. Here Singapore is a good instance.

•In the 1980s, Singapore's economy started to prosper, and the focus of Singapore's education system shifted from quantity to quality. More differentiation for pupils with different academic abilities were implemented, such as revamping vocational education under the new Institute of Technology and splitting of the Normal stream in secondary schools into Normal (Academic) and Normal

(Technical) streams. The Gifted Education Programme was also set up to cater to more academically inclined students. In 1997, the Singapore education system started to change into an ability-driven one after then Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong outlined his "Thinking Schools, Learning Nations" vision. Under this policy, more emphasis was given to national education, creative thinking, collaborative learning as well as ICT literacy (“Education in Singapore,” n. d.).

•Expand educational outlay depending on the current need and long term demand on the country. It is to be bridged with the efficacy of the manpower, future policy of the country and economic goals.

Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be said that multi-disciplinary education finances and transformation of education drives simultaneously and never-ending. In the current digital world, it is happening rapidly. After ever five years concerned the authority of the government should review the school and university education system; books and course outlines should be reviewed for updating. Therefore, constant investment is mandatory here. If students graduate with updated and time-oriented courses, it will create an efficient work-force to keep long term contribution to the economy of the country. If the economics of the country is flourished, the job market will be broadened and ultimately the unemployment problem will be reduced. Regarding this Vila (2015) says.

Most economic analyses on the value of education have focused on the contribution of formal schooling to increased earning capacity in the labour market. Longer schooling improves the chances of employment (Rivera-Batiz, 1992; Iyigun & Owen, 1999), reduces the duration of unemployment (Kiefer, 1985; Kettunen, 1997) and positively influences income through higher labour market earnings (in Vila, 2005).

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SCHOOL INCLUSION AND EDUCATION OF CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM; ANALYTICAL STUDY

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Abstract:*The school for diversity allowed for a new approach to the learning activities in school, which is also determined by the need to ensure equal opportunities for access to education for all members of a community. In this respect, many studies have evaluated teacher attitudes towards the integration and inclusion of children with special educational needs in schools. Our research aimed at identifying a significant relationship between the attitudes of teachers in mass education on the school inclusion of students with SEN and the underlying factors. The group of subjects included a total of 961 teachers in primary and middle education in Romania. The findings of the research have shown the existence of a diversity of attitudes, perceptions and opinions about the opportunity of integrating students with SEN into mainstream education; some perceptions highlight the role and importance of common learning experiences in a school and focus on the need for special efforts by all actors involved, both at system and school level. There are also opponents who do not exploit this educational practice in schools in our country, but are rather attached to the traditional model partially characterized by numerous prejudices, stereotypes and negative attitudes towards students with SEN.*

Key words: *inclusive education; special needs education (SEN); school inclusion; disabilities*.

1. Introduction

The social evolution of recent years has increasingly brought about the idea of human diversity, unity in diversity, the valorisation of diversity, and the opportunities offered to universal education and culture by the diversity of experiences, traditions and models that have arisen over time, without making hierarchies and subjective value judgments on them. In this rather generous context, we may state that the emergence and substantiation of the theories and practices regarding the integration and school inclusion of all categories of students in the community and the shaping of the idea of school for diversity enabled a new approach to the learning activities in school, a fact also generated by the need to ensure equal opportunities for access to education for all members of a community and the satisfaction of training and education requirements according to the intellectual and aptitude potential of each child included in the educational programme of a school. This concern in the field of educational policies can also be understood as a (re)confirmation and resignification of a fundamental didactic principle, namely *the adaptation of the structure and content of education to the psycho-physical, age and individual peculiarities of students, in order to develop their personality in a balanced and harmonious way*.

Today, most of the schools belonging to the special education network in our country (and other neighbouring countries) have remained functional, many of them even in the same premises, spaces that have been refurbished, upgraded or resized. The difference consists in the fact that, compared to the previous years, special schools now include especially children who have severe or associated disabilities and who cannot be directed towards normal schools because they cannot benefit from certain types of specialized services, recovery and empowerment interventions. The fact that the school network in special education has remained tributary to older functional models, where the tendency of self-preservation of the "special school" environment is still common means that the modern inclusive guidelines have not been accepted, promoted and encouraged everywhere by all decision makers; this is because diversity as social value forces the school to comply, in a timely, flexible and contextual manner, with institutional/organizational resources through an absolutely customized educational policy, nevertheless different from that of other schools of the same type/level and fundamentally distinctfrom the reproductive, normative and prescriptive "politics" of the traditional school (Waine, 1989). The heterogeneity of the inclusive school type is significantly completed by the presence, in the space of the school, of students with special needs who live, relate and learn among and with their peers and colleagues (Lerner, 1997). Thus, the*inclusive school* spotlights the human person as an original, unique and unrepeatable being, emphasizing the idea that in every society there are different people, different groups, motivations, reasons and views (Melero, 1990).

In the view of several authors (Barton & Oliver, 1992;Biklen, 1992; Fulcher, 1989), the promotion of inclusive education should be based on the following framework principles:

•All students have the right to participate in all activities included in the curriculum of mass schools.

•During the school program, the teaching staff and specialists will directly support in all ways the maximum integration of students with special educational needs.

•By means of a series of radical curricular measures, the school will have to meet all the students' educational needs without harming their dignity and personality.

•Inclusive education classes/groups of students will include children close in age and level of socio-cultural experience.

2. Teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and children with special needs

A number of studies have evaluated teacher attitudes towards the integration and inclusion of children with special educational needs in mainstream schools. Thus, Avramidis& Norwich (2002) discuss a number of factors that significantly influence the attitudes of teachers: the nature and severity of children's deficiency, the existence of human and material support in school and classroom. In addition, faith, professional background and personal style of child valorization by teachers have a decisive role in ensuring the success of inclusive practices (Norwich, 1994).

Salvia & Munson (1986) synthesized three categories of variables that can influence teachers' attitudes: a. child-related variables (type of deficiency); b. teacher-related variables (gender, teaching experience, contact experience with children with SEN, training level, set of beliefs and values, certain personality factors); variables related to the educational environment (presence of support services). Forlin (1995) showed that teachers who provide educational support in schools are more likely to accept children with intellectual and physical deficiencies than teachers in mainstream schools. He also states that educators are more reluctant to accept the integration of children with cognitive impairment and more readily accept children with physical deficiency; the degree of acceptance of partial/total integration differs depending on the severity of the deficiency: children with mild or moderate deficiencies are more easily accepted in mass schools, while children with severe deficiencies are not easily accepted for integration into mainstream schools. Ward, Center and Bochner (1994) have shown that teachers have a positive attitude towards the integration of children with SEN perceived as having mild difficulties in learning (children with mild physical and sensory impairment) because they do not require a special educational and training effort on the part of educators. The study by Clough & Lindsay (1991) found a less favorable attitude towards the integration of children with SEN requiring additional professional skills (children with moderate mental deficiency, increased sensory impairment, hyperactivity and behavioral disorders).

Croll& Mores (2000) conducted a study that highlighted the fact that most teachers make a clear distinction between students who can be integrated, depending on the nature of the deficiency; thus, the education of children with mild or moderate learning difficulties, sensory and physical deficiencies is seen favorably, unlike that of children with severe learning difficulties and of those with emotional and behavioral disorders. A study conducted by Mushoriwa (2001) aimed at identifying the attitudes of primary school teachers towards the inclusion of blind children in mainstream education; the results showed that although a blind child could be physically included in a mainstream school, he would be psychologically and academically excluded because of the negative attitude of teachers.

Concerning gender, most studies have found no significant difference between male and female teachers in accepting the integration of children with SEN in mainstream schools. Instead, Leyser, Kapperman& Keller (1994) showed that, generally, teachers with less than 10-15 years of experience in teaching have a higher acceptance/tolerance level towards children with SEN compared to those with more work experience in school. But, there are studies that show that the teaching experience is not positively correlated with teachers' attitudes towards integration (Avramidis, Bayliss& Burden, 2000). Other studies suggest that as teachers are involved in integration programs for children with SEN, their attitudes could become more positive. Leyser et al. (1994) have shown that educators with high experience with children with SEN have more favorable attitudes towards integration than those with less or no experience with such students.

Teacher training activities for school inclusion can more easily develop positive attitudes towards integration, as shown by Beh-Pajooh (1992) and Shimman (1990). They argue that teachers who have been trained to work with children with learning difficulties have adopted more emotional attitudes and emotional responses to their integration than teachers who have not attended such courses. The studies of Avramidis, Bayliss& Burden (2000) reinforce the assumption that a special education qualification is associated with less resistance to inclusion. Dickens-Smith (1995) studied the attitudes of teachers in mass schools and of those in special education towards inclusion in the wake of attending specialized courses; both groups of subjects showed a more favorable attitude after these courses, and the teachers in mass education registered the greatest positive change. Thus, the author concludes that teacher training is the key to the success of inclusion.

Canadian researchers have identified another factor that influences not only teachers' attitudes towards inclusion, but also the teaching style and the degree of adaptation to a heterogeneous class. This factor refers to teachers' beliefs about the responsibilities they face with students who are either exceptional or at risk. Jordan, Lindsay &Stanovich (1997) have shown that educators who consider that disability is inherent in any student adopt a different teaching style than teachers who consider disability to be the result of student-environment interaction; the latter are more involved in trying to form students and make them understand the school contents they send to them. At the same time, the study by Soodak, Podell& Lehman (1998) has shown that educators who assume responsibility to teach a variety of students (thus recognizing the contribution to students' educational progress) and are confident in their skills and abilities will successfully implement inclusion programs.

Several studies have analyzed environmental factors and their influence on teachers' attitudes towards integration / inclusion. One of the factors that positively correlate with inclusive attitudes is the presence of support services at the class and school level (support teachers, special education teachers, speech therapists, material resources, educational resources, IT equipment, accessibility of premises). Janney, Snell, Beers &Raynes (1995) showed that most of the teachers participating in the study hesitated to accept children with SEN in their classes because they only anticipated what might be worse: they would be left to deal with those children alone. Later, these educators became more receptive as a result of receiving support services. Respondents pointed out that the support received from school management was decisive in achieving outstanding results with children with SEN. Janney, Snell, Beers &Raynes (1995) demonstrated that the success of the partial integration of children with SEN also depended on the assistance provided by the support teacher both at the interpersonal level and at the level of adaptation and accessibilization of the content of learning.

Other aspects of the school environment have been identified as obstacles to be overcome for inclusive policies to be successfully implemented. Thus, the following categories of barriers / obstacles were highlighted: overcrowded classes, insufficient didactic materials, insufficient time for content planning together with the support teacher, lack of flexible timetable, inadequate support from non-educational specialists (Avramidis, Bayliss& Burden, 2000). Mass education teachers believe that the implementation of a school inclusion program calls for additional work due to the need for careful planning of educational activities that may meet the needs of a heterogeneous class. From this point of view, physical and human support is an important factor in generating positive attitudes from teachers regarding the integration of children with SEN.

Several studies have shown that inclusion of younger children is seen more favorably, and Hasting& Oakford (2003) explain this phenomenon by the fact that a younger child spends more time with one teacher and the impact of special requirements on the teacher is much smaller. Ellins& Porter (2005) conducted a study targeting middle-school teachers and their attitudes towards the special educational needs of children. The results showed differences depending on the type of subject being taught; thus, teachers of mathematics, science and English presented a less favorable attitude compared to teachers teaching subjects from other curricular areas, and students with special needs obtained the poorest results in sciences, where the teacher had been the most negative regarding integration.

Hornby (2001) argues for the need to focus attention on promoting the concept of responsible inclusion. A study conducted by Vaughn, Schumm, Jallad, Slusher& Samuel (1996) involved parents, teachers, administrators and managers of three schools over 2 years, and the aim was to develop several inclusive models in order to meet the special needs of students. In their view, for inclusion to be effective and responsible, inclusive practices should contain different components, one of which is to allow teachers to choose between teaching or not to inclusive classes, in contrast to the idea that all teachers, irrespective of their attitude and training regarding the integration of children with SEN in mass schoolsshould teach these children. Tod (2001) suggests that teachers face at least two challenges: a. they have to fulfill their role of promoting the inclusive education system, but also to achieve the objectives established by the syllabus; b. they are required to contribute to minimizing the segregation phenomenon on the basis of a belief that this is the solution for removing inequalities in the system. Dessent (1987) considers that attending specialized courses by teachers facing classes with students with SEN should be a professional right. In addition, these trainings will not have any results unless they are related to a change in school, i.e. additional resources and support services.

The research presented shows that, although teachers are generally receptive to the idea of inclusive education, they do not agree with a full inclusion of children with SEN. Instead, teachers have different attitudes about the type of children that can be integrated, depending on the nature of the disabilities. The factors contributing to adopting positive attitudes are: access to training programs and opportunities for direct interaction with children with special needs before working in the classroom, support services, school environment improvement, planning opportunities and school leadership focused onthe principles of inclusion and equal chances to access education for all children

3. Methodology

The aim of the research is to identify a significant relationship between the attitudes of teachers in mass education regarding the school integration of students with SEN and the underlying factors.

In order to collect the necessary data, we used the survey method based on a questionnaire developed by us, namely the Questionnaire for identifying Teachers' Attitudes on the Integration of Students with SEN that uses a four-step scale in which the operationalization of the concept of integration attitude was achieved through a number of three dimensions: discomfort, tolerance and insecurity, and for which the internal consistency coefficient - *Cronbach α* - is 0.83.

The group of subjects included a total of 961 teachers from primary and middle-school education who underwent training in the field of children with special needs education. Of these, 460 teach in primary school and 501 in middle school.

Research hypotheses

In line with some of the above-mentioned studies, we wanted to see to what extent the professional skills and disability/disorder type encountered in students with SEN may influence the attitude (operationalized by the level of discomfort, tolerance and insecurity) of teachers in the Romanian education system during the activities carried out in classes/schools where students with special needs are integrated. Thus, the following working hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is a significant relationship between the level of professional competencies of teachers and their level of discomfort, tolerance and insecurity in the activities with students with special needs; the higher the level of professional skills, the higher the level of acceptance of children with special needs and the lower the level of discomfort and insecurity among teachers.
2. The presence of students with mental disabilities integrated in mass education will significantly influence the level of tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among the teachers who work with them.
3. The presence of students with sensory impairments integrated in mass education will significantly influence the level of tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among the teachers who work with them.

4. The presence of students with behavioral disorders integrated in mass education will significantly influence the level of tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among teachers who work with them.
5. There are significant differences in the level of tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among primary school teachers compared to those in middle school education.

4. Results and discussions

The data obtainedfromthequestionnaireswerestatisticallyprocessed, takingintoaccounteachresearchhypothesis. Thus, for thefirsthypothesis - *there is a significant relationship between the level of professional competencies of teachers and their level of discomfort, tolerance and insecurity in the activities with students with special needs; the higher the level of professional skills, the higher the level of acceptance of children with special needs and the lower the level of discomfort and insecurity among teachers*- thefollowingresultswereachieved:

	tolerance		discomfort		insecurity	
	r	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*
professional competences	0,644	0,006	0,541	0,007	0,710	0,000

Pearson Correlations (N-961)

Teachers who have acquired competencies specific to working with children with SEN are more tolerant of the idea of integrating these students into mainstream schools by easily accepting students with different deficiencies in class. At the same time, as teachers have more specific knowledge of inclusive education, they are more aware of the implications and difficulties arising from the particularities of their work with students with SEN. The greater amount of effort deployed in instructive-educational activities with students with different disabilities, the assumption of responsibility for each child with SEN, the discrepancy between theoretical information and classroom practical difficulties could be the basis for perceiving a high level of discomfort and insecurity experienced by teachers; this conclusion is somewhat contradictory to other studies mentioned in the literature, which strengthens the features of inclusive education in our country, in the sense that the minimum conditions and resources for carrying out activities within the limits of minimum quality standards are not ensured.

For the second hypothesis - *the presence of students with mental disabilities integrated in mass education will significantly influence the level of tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among the teachers who work with them*- the results were as follows:

	tolerance		discomfort		insecurity	
	r	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*
mental disability	0,594	0,023	0,541	0,001	0,610	0,000

Pearson Correlations (N-961)

In some situations, the tolerance displayed by teachers is imposed either by the social system or by the school unit management, in the desire to align with national and European standards on inclusion, without a strong intrinsic incentive and basis. Many teachers working with mentally disabled children face difficulties in managing their low potential as a barrier to optimizing classroom activity. The minor advances experienced by mentally disabled students compared to the workload of the teachers and the complexity of their activities with them may be the basis for perceiving a high level of discomfort and a feeling of insecurity in the profession.

For the third hypothesis - *the presence of students with sensory impairments integrated in mass education will significantly influence the level of tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among the teachers who work with them* - the following results were obtained:

	tolerance		discomfort		insecurity	
	r	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*
sensory impairments	0,276	0,106	0,662	0,000	0,659	0,000

Pearson Correlations (N-961)

In many situations, teachers accept with difficulty the presence of students with sensory/physical deficiencies in classes, invoking the opportunity to integrate them into the special education system where they can benefit from better conditions and resources, the lack of facilities related to the accessibility of physical spaces in mass schools, the lack of material resources and adequate teaching resources for students with sensory impairments, specific difficulties in the design and organization of classroom activities, all of which have resulted in a low level of tolerance over these categories of students, a level of discomfort due to the inability to provide optimal learning conditions for these children in the classroom, a feeling of uncertainty caused by the difficulties of establishing relationships and communication or insufficient methodical and specialized training required in the act of teaching these categories ofstudents.

For the fourth hypothesis - *the presence of students with behavioral disorders integrated in mass education will significantly influence the level of* *tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among teachers who work with them*- the results were as follows:

	tolerance		discomfort		insecurity	
	r	*p*	*r*	*p*	*r*	*p*
behavioral disorders	0,284	0,036	0,241	0,087	0,547	0,003

Pearson Correlations (N-961)

These results show that teachers know the particularities of these children, have experience in working with them and better deal with the difficulties encountered in the teaching process. Also, the fact that behavioral disorders are not always associated with a low intellectual level, can provide satisfactory school results, and teacher tolerance may be acceptable. Under conditions of low discomfort and high tolerance, the results indicate a quite high level of uncertainty. This can be attributed to the emotional lability and the unpredictability of this category of students, their frequent and atypical outbursts, the intensification of specific symptoms and the emergence of new disorders such as those caused by hyperactivity and attention deficit.

For the last hypothesis - *there are significant differences in the level of tolerance, discomfort and insecurity among primary school teachers compared to those in middle school education* - the following results were obtained: for the discomfort variable t(959) = 0.41, p = 0.68; for tolerance t(959) = - 1.35, p = 0.18; for uncertainty t(959) = 0.30, p = 0.76. In all three situations, the values obtained invalidate the last hypothesis, which determines us to say that regardless of the schooling cycle we are talking about a certain discomfort of the teachers in the activity with the students with SEN and even if the difficulty of the teaching contentincreases at the middle school cycle and the requirements to the students' performance grow and diversify, the level of discomfort is relatively the same as in the primary cycle. Teachers face the same difficulties in curriculum adaptation and diversification, with the same material deficiencies and the same support from the leadership of the school unit, regardless of the teaching cycle they teach. Teachers also feel the same pressure from the school community to achieve satisfactory results and to cope with any situation in working with students with SEN.

5. Conclusions and discussions

For most teachers, the experience of teaching students with SEN has confirmed the existence of a variety of perceptions and opinions about the opportunity of integrating students with SEN into mainstream education; some perceptions emphasize the role and importance of common learning experiences in a mass school and focus on the need for special efforts by all actors involved, both at system and school level. There are also opponents who do not value this educational practice in the schools in our country, being rather attached to the traditional model in which many prejudices, stereotypes and negative attitudes towards students with special needs have been outlined, especially those with intellectual and hearing disabilities.

At the same time, in our specialized literature, we cannot speak of many studies regarding the teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and the integration in public education of students with different disabilities. We can say that our research partially confirms the results of other studies conducted for this purpose on an international level, but sometimes they contradict them, there being revealed differences in the way of applying the policies of inclusion in the education system in our country. Thus, the high level of tolerance of teachers with specific skills for working with children with SEN, often accompanied by discomfort and insecurity, could be explained by the fact that, in the Romanian education system, inclusive practices have not been sufficiently prepared, teachers have beenplaced in a position to integrate students with SEN without wanting or accepting this situation (rather it was an imposed decision or a compromise situation to maintain the number of classes and teaching positions in schools where the number or students had diminished). In addition, the implementation of syllabi for the school inclusion of students with SEN was not preceded by school-awareness activities and teacher training programs, thus placing teachers in the situation of not having consistent information about the organization and specificity of educational and training activities for the circumstances of havingstudents with SEN in class.

The school is a community institution that has to provide educational services to any child/young person, regardless of his bio-psycho-socio-cultural origin, nature or particularities. Regarding the number of students enrolled in a class, teachers perceive the need to reduce the number of students in the classes in which one or more students with disabilities are integrated, in order to support personalized intervention, increasing the level of attention of each student and optimal insertion at the class level, thus fostering interpersonal relationships between colleagues. One of the important conditions for facilitating work with students with SEN is that of access to adapted and differentiated teaching means, teachers perceiving this lack as an impediment. Teachers believe that an optimal process of integration depends on the presence of material and physical resources in school institutions, especially the accessibilization of the school environment, whereas their limitation creates barriers to the efficient realization of this process on a large scale.

In general, the results obtained in this study indicate a high level of discomfort and uncertainty of teachers regarding the situation of the integration of students with mental, physical and sensorial disabilities, thus indicating the vulnerability of the inclusive education process in the Romanian education system. The most acute problems are related to the human resource, the lack of consistent methodical training and major difficulties in managing the classes in which children with SEN are integrated. Given that teachers' attitudes contribute to the efficiency of inclusion, it can be said that the inclusive education process in our country still has a long way to go, requiring improvements and possible interventions that may support the formation of positive perceptions and attitudes towards educational diversity, taking responsibility for all students and important personal changes starting with prejudices and stereotypes about people with disabilities, adopting coping strategies to lessen discomfort and uncertainty in the classroom, better collaboration with the school manager and the child's family, involvement in training and education activities in inclusive education; all these aspects are imperatives of the *school for diversity*, a tendency and necessity of the educational system in our country.

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THE IMPACT OF CRITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS ON TEACHER CONCEPTIONS AND BELIEFS ABOUT TEACHING AND LEARNING: THE MEDIATOR ROLE OF CAREER IDENTITY

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Abstract: *The present study investigated the connections between teacher education students' teacher conceptions about teaching and learning (i.e. constructivist conceptions, traditional conceptions), career identity and critical consciousness components (i.e. critical agency, critical reflection, critical action). The sample included 141 (mean age=21.95, SD=3.17) future primary school or kindergarten teachers enrolled in the second and third year at the university. Self-reported measures were employed to assess students' teacher conceptions about teaching and learning, their career identity and critical consciousness components. The results showed that the career identity was significantly positively related to constructivist conceptions whilst the traditional conceptions held no significant associations. Constructivist conceptions were also significantly positively related to critical agency, critical action, and egalitarianism. Career identity mediated the relation between teacher conceptions about teaching and learning and critical agency. Further, the educational implications of the findings are thoroughly discussed.*

Keywords: *critical consciousness; teacher conceptions; career identity; mediation.*

1. Introduction

The present article aims to investigate the emancipatory role of critical consciousness regarding the career commitment, teachers' beliefs and conceptions concerning teaching in future kindergarten and primary school teachers. The rationale guiding this study implies as Diemer and Blustein (2006) puts it, the persistent asymmetry in educational and vocational resources in different urban communities relative to resources. It is generally accepted that this asymmetry it is primarily socio-political in nature (Watts, Griffith, & Abdul-Adil, 1999) and results in socio-political barriers to the career development process of young people (Diemer & Blustein, 2006; Constantine, Erickson, Banks & Timberlake, 1998).

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Because these barriers to the career development process are primarily socio-political, it follows that the capacity to address these socio-political barriers (known in this study as critical consciousness) may assist urban adolescents in engaging effectively with the career development process. Moreover, critical consciousness with its focus on praxis and critical agency, the nature of the action corresponding to the nature of individuals understanding (Freire, 1970), should have a significant impact on teachers' beliefs and intentions concerning teaching. Referring to individuals the ability to analyse, navigate, and challenge the restrictive social forces critical consciousness is shaping in the same time the life of the individual as well as the community (Freire, 1970; Duncan-Andrade & Morrell, 2008). To summarize, in the present study we were interested in analysing the influence of teacher education students' critical consciousness on their career identity, and, consequently, on their teaching beliefs and conceptions concerning teaching and learning.

1.1. Critical consciousness: models, components and role

Current formulations of critical consciousness concept are mainly grounded in Freirean thought, and refer to three central elements: critical reflection, critical motivation (or efficacy), and critical action. The process of developing reflection and action is a core element in Critical Consciousness Theory because critical consciousness implies a process of learning to easily identify social, political, and economic contradictions, and to take action against the oppressive elements of social reality. Critical reflection refers to a process of learning to put under scrutiny the social conditions and structures that lead to marginalize groups of people. The perceived capacity and commitment to address such injustice refers to critical motivation. Specifically, critical reflection refers to a social analysis and moral rejection of societal inequities, such as social, economic, ethnic, and gender inequities that constrain individual agency and well-being. Critically reflective people have a systemic framework in which they view social problems and inequalities. Critical action refers to engaging individuals or groups of people to change perceived injustices. Specifically, this refers to individual or collective action taken in order to change societal aspects, such as institutional policies and practices, which are perceived to be unjust. Critical efficacy refers to the perceived capacity to influence social and political change by either individual or collective action. It is more likely for people to engage in this process if they have the feeling that they can determine change (Diemer, Rapa, Voight & McWhirter, 2016).

The relation between reflection and action is reciprocal. Critical reflection being generally considered as preceding critical action. In other words, people do not act without the awareness that their social conditions are unjust. Freire (1970) emphasized that when individuals engage in an analysis of their social conditions, they feel compelled to act towards changing them. Accordingly, as people act on changing their social conditions, this would result in a deeper understanding of structural oppression. The circular process of critical consciousness development refers to the simultaneous growth of critical reflection and critical action. However, there can also be times when critical action does not meet its purpose, which can lead to frustration, rather than an increased awareness of societal inequities (Watts, Diemer & Voight, 2011).

As emphasized by Watts and Hipolito-Delgado (2015), the central elements of critical consciousness theory were supporting awareness of socio-political circumstances, encouraging critical questioning, and fostering collective identity. In the scientific literature, theories and conceptualizations of critical consciousness usually describe some combination of critical social analysis, collective social identity, political self-efficacy, and actions designed to promote social justice (Watts, Diemer & Voight, 2011). Therefore, critical consciousness has been considered as an antidote to injustice mainly because it advances awareness, motivation, and agency to identify, challenge and change social and structural constraints (Diemer, Rapa, Voight & McWhirter, 2016).

1.2. Career development theory and career identity

One of the most salient theories regarding career development was developed by Super (1950). In its final form this theory stresses that vocational maturity is a multidimensional characteristic which develops with age at different rates in different individuals. It has a significant role in the prediction of occupational satisfaction. occupational success, and career success (Super & Jordaan, 1973). Super's (1980) theory highlights the successful tasks of career development at each developmental stage. For the youth that means developing a connection to the adult world of work, as well as a strong vocational identity (Diemer & Blustein, 2006). The career development theory also takes into consideration aspects related to social context, like race, gender, and social class. Moreover, Blustein, McWhirter and Perry (2005) with their emancipatory communitarian perspective which incorporates the socio-political context into Super's Career Development Theory. This perspective situates the career development process within the social context which can have restrictive effect regarding the access to opportunity among marginalized groups, such as undergraduate students. As Super (1980) puts it young people need to clarify their vocational identity and moreover to develop a connection to their future career. We agree with Diemer and Blustein (2006) which suggests that career identity together with the commitment to the notion of a career could indicate progress in the relevant developmental tasks of young people as suggested by Super (1980). Career and vocational identity refer to the possession of a clear and stable picture of one's goals, interests, and talents. In fact, these are the characteristics that determine relatively untroubled decision-making, confidence in one's ability to make good decisions when facing various inevitable environmental ambiguities (Holland, Johnston & Asama, 1993). Career commitment being defined as one's motivation to work in a chosen vocation, represents a multidimensional construct. Three components of the construct can be described. First, career identity which implies establishing a close emotional association with one's career. Second, career planning includes determining one's developmental needs and setting career goals.

Third, career resilience defined as resisting career disruption in the face of adversity (Carson & Bedeian, 1994).

The existing literature regarding the relationship between critical consciousness and progress in career development does not clarify the link between the two. Some unexpected results were offered by Conchas' (2001) study which showed that young people with both lower and higher levels of critical consciousness invested in the career development process. Also, Fine's (1991) study found that adolescents with greater critical consciousness tended to drop out of high school, rather than more effectively engage with the career development process. In contrast, O'Connor's (1997), as well as Chronister and McWhirter (2004) research results indicated that critical consciousness contributes to remaining invested in the career development process and maintaining a sense of hope for their vocational future. Therefore, observing or resisting injustice determined individuals to believe that action desired social outcomes despite structural limitations (O'Connor, 1997). Finally, Diemer and Hsieh (2008) as well as, Diemer and Blustein (2006) observed that critical consciousness may determine young people to surpass socio-political barriers and engage with career development processes. Therefore, the previously mentioned studies show that greater levels of critical consciousness relate to greater clarity and increased commitment to future careers. By maintaining a critical awareness regarding the socio-political barriers young people may best engage in the career development process.

1.3. Conceptions and intentions concerning teaching

We choose to investigate the conceptions and intentions to teaching similar to the way Gow and Kember (1993) formulated them. They describe two teaching orientations or conceptions, learning facilitation and knowledge transmission. The learning facilitation orientation characterizes teachers who conceive teaching as a facilitative process to help pupils develop problem solving skills and critical thinking abilities. This orientation more often involves interactive class sessions. Teachers are more involved and do no neglect their role in providing motivation and stimulating interest. This approach is also known as the constructivist conception about teaching and learning (Chan & Elliott, 2004). Turning to the other side of the argument, teachers whose focus is on knowledge transmission are valuing more the subject than the process of learning. For them, the teacher is the expert in the discipline. The main goal of the educational process is preparing pupils as future professionals (Gow & Kember, 1993). This is known as the traditional approach to teacher and learning and is represents what Freire called the "banking model" of education.

We find conceptions and intentions concerning teaching more informing than teachers approach to teaching, which in turn might reflect the behaviour that the teacher is constrained to adopt by the institution, the curriculum or the pupils themselves. By investigating the approach to teaching, it is likely to reveal teacher's perceptions of the teaching environment than their own conception of teaching. That is, a specific response to a defined teaching situation that will be directly manifested in the teacher's classroom behaviour (Martin et al., 2000).

In this sense, after considering Freire's approach to critical consciousness we expect to find a strong relationship between higher levels of critical consciousness and the constructivist orientation to teaching. Although the literature provides mixed evidence, our view is that critical consciousness may be instrumental in navigating the career development process for young people. We believe that urban adolescents may view the attainment of a meaningful and rewarding career as a means of empowering themselves.

2. Method

The main objective of the present research was to investigate the extent to which critical consciousness components (e.g. critical action, critical reflection, critical agency etc.) influence career commitment as well as teacher beliefs and conceptions about teaching and learning in future primary school and kindergarten teachers. Four questionnaires were administered to 141 teacher education students enrolled in the second and third year of a bachelor's degree program. The questionnaires evaluated the level of career identity, critical consciousness components and the conceptions about teaching and learning held by students. The participants were also asked to provide various demographic information such as age, gender and area of living.

2.1. Participants

The sample included 141 university undergraduates enrolled in the second- and third-year bachelor's degree teacher education program. The participants age range between 20 and 42 years old (M=21.95, SD=3.17). Participation in the study was completely voluntary and anonymous. Upon the instructions given by the researcher, participants completed the self-reporting measures.

2.2. Instruments

The Teaching and Learning Conceptions Questionnaire (TLCQ) generally refers to two different conceptions of the teaching/learning core (Chan & Elliott, 2004). These may be referred to as Traditional (18 items) and Constructivist (12 items). In the traditional conception, teaching is seen as a nonproblematic transfer of knowledge or an untransformed manner from an expert to a novice. Learning is then the absorption of transferred knowledge. In the constructivist conception, learning is the creation and acquisition of knowledge by the learner through reasoning and justification while teaching is the provision and facilitation of the learning process rather than transmission of knowledge. Students were asked to rate their responses for the 30 items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree).

The critical consciousness scale (Diemer, Rapa, Voight & Park, 2017) evaluated the critical reflection perceived inequality (8 items), critical action/socio-political participation (9 items), and critical reflection /egalitarianism (4 items). Respondents were asked to answer each of these items on a six-point Likert-type agreement scale from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree for critical reflection items and, for critical action items, on a five-point behavioural frequency scale ranging from 1 = never did this to 5 = at least once a week.

The critical agency subscale from the McWhirter's measure for critical consciousness (McWhirter & McWhirter, 2015) was also used to measure critical motivation/agency, or youths' perceived capacity and motivation to produce social change—this measure being the only one of the critical consciousness measures that explicitly measures critical motivation through the critical agency subscale (6 items). Agency is connected to the notion of internal political efficacy. The scale items reflect a moral concern with inequity, motivation to address it, and perceived ability to make a difference (Diemer, McWhirter, Ozer & Rapa, 2015). Response options range from 1 = strongly agree to 6 = strongly disagree.

Career identity was measured using the three-item sub-scale from the career commitment measure (Carson & Bedeian, 1994). Career identity reflects the extent to which participants identify with an elected career path. Respondents were asked to rate these items on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree).

3. Results

The statistical analyses were performed using SPSS version 24 for MacOS. For the instruments applied in the study Cronbach' s alphas were computed to check their internal consistency. Pearson's product-moment correlation was used in the preliminary analyses to examine the associative relationship between variables. The macro PROCESS for MacOS (Hayes, 2013) was used to test the mediation models. This procedure enables simultaneous testing of several mediators and provides bootstrap confidence intervals (CIs) for the indirect effects (Hayes, 2013). Confidence intervals that do not contain zero indicate a significant indirect effect (mediation). In the mediation model, 5000 bootstrap resamples were used in order to estimate confidence intervals. Another valuable feature of this test is that it does not rely on the assumption of normality.

3.1. Correlations between students' critical consciousness components, conceptions about teaching and learning and career identity

Results (Table 1) show significant and positive correlation between constructivist conception, critical agency, career identity and egalitarianism. Therefore, correlations between traditional conception, critical consciousness components and career identity were not significant. Also, there are significant and positive correlations between egalitarianism and critical agency and a significant negative correlation between critical agency and critical reflection. The critical action component and the traditional conception did not show significant correlations.

Table 1. Alpha Cronbach and correlations between students' critical consciousness components, conceptions about teaching and learning and career identity.

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Critical reflection	*.872*	-.001	-.218**	-.009	-.026	-.056	-.147
2. Critical action	-.001	*.803*	.080	-.022	-.147	-.183*	.164
3. Critical agency	-.218**	.080	*.769*	.200*	.165	.414**	.396**
4. Egalitarianism	-.009	-.022	.200*	*.852*	.012	.225**	.108
5. Traditional conception	-.026	-.147	.165	.012	*.096*	-.050	.144
6. Constructivist conception	-.056	-.183*	.414**	.225**	-.050	*.872*	.388**
7. Career Identity	-.147	.164	.396**	.108	.144	.388**	*.796*
Mean	28.14	22.08	25.90	22.34	55.97	57.03	13.04
SD	10.07	10.23	3.40	3.19	11.82	4.91	2.27

Note: $*p \leq .05$; $**p \leq .01$. Alpha Cronbach values are provided on the diagonal

3.2. Career identity as mediator on relationship between critical agency and constructivist conception towards teaching and learning

A simple mediation analysis was conducted using regression analysis and 5000 bootstrap samples to examine whether the effect of critical agency on constructivist conception about teaching and learning was mediated by career identity.

This analysis confirmed that there was a significant total effect of critical agency on constructivist conception about teaching and learning (c), and this relationship remain significant when the effect of career identity was also taken into account (c').

This analysis revealed that critical agency was significantly positively related to career identity (a) and career identity was significantly positively related to constructivist conceptions about teaching and learning when controlling for critical agency (b). See Figure 1 for an illustration of the mentioned effects.

Results showed that career identity partially mediated the effect of critical agency on constructivist conceptions about teaching and learning, as indicated by a significant indirect effect (B = .152, SE = .085, 95% BCa CI: .028, .368), such that the high levels of critical agency predicted high levels of constructivist conceptions about teaching and learning, and this was both directly and as well underlined by higher levels of career identity.

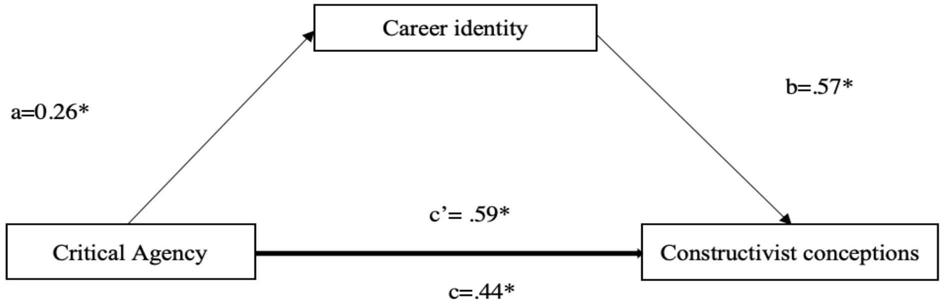

Figure 1. Mediation model regarding the mediating effect of career identity on the relation between critical agency and constructivist conceptions about teaching and learning. Unstandardized coefficients are presented ($p \leq .01$).

4. Conclusions

The purpose of the present study was to investigate the extent to which critical consciousness components, such as critical reflection, critical action, and critical agency/motivation, influence conceptions about teaching and learning as well as career identity. The positive significant correlation of critical agency and the non-significant correlation with the traditional conceptions about learning emphasize the idea that critical agency encourages future teachers to build active learning environments that develop critical thinking, discovery, and participation. Moreover, the constructivist conceptions of teacher education students were found to have significant positive correlation with their career identity, suggesting that a strong sense of belonging contributes to creating a democratic learning environment. In contrast, the traditional conceptions held only non-significant correlations with critical consciousness components. The traditional learning model considers the teacher as the source of knowledge and students as passive recipients of knowledge, illustrating exactly Freire's banking model of education (1970). Such model/conception emphasizes learning by receiving information, especially from the teacher and from textbooks, to help students encounter and learn well-defined concepts (Howard et al., 2000; Prawat, 1992). This is in line with Critical Consciousness Theory, which has emancipatory values that counter the passive transmission and reception of knowledge.

In line with some previous findings (O'Connor, 1997; Chronister & McWhirter, 2004), the positive association between constructivist conceptions and career identity may indicate that critical consciousness contributes to maintaining a sense of hope for the students' future career as teachers. Critical consciousness may lead young people to surpass socio-political barriers and engage with career development processes. Therefore, we may consider that greater levels of critical consciousness relate to greater clarity and increased commitment to future careers.

The constructivist approach positively correlates also with critical action and egalitarianism, which emphasizes the individual or collective action needed to produce socio-political change; in this case, in changing the traditional approach to learning as well as the endorsement of societal equality in the classroom.

The mediation analysis also reveals a distinctive pattern of influence, with the career identity mediating the relation between critical agency and constructivist conceptions. The results may emphasize the idea that the motivation, agency, and actions needed to address racism and inequity might translate to another type of engagement such as the approach to teaching. It appears that when students have moral concerns regarding inequity, the motivation to address it, the perceived ability to make a difference and the strong career identity develop naturally, with a positive influence on the conceptions about teaching and learning (Diemer, Rapa, Voight & McWhirter, 2015; McWhirther & McWhirther, 2015).

The findings have important implications in the educational setting regarding teachers' awareness of the potential outcome of critical consciousness in shaping the teaching and learning environment via their conceptions toward teaching. The purpose is to develop students' critical agency in order to obtain a democratic learning environment where learning represents the creation and acquisition of knowledge by the learner through reasoning and justification. Then, teaching becomes the provision and facilitation of the learning process rather than the transmission of knowledge (Chan & Elliott, 2004). Another important implication is related to the protective value of the career identity in maintaining a sense of hope for the future career and for the practice of teaching. A strong career identity may encourage the creativity necessary for building interactive learning environment. In conclusion, the usefulness of critical consciousness resides in the fact that it is a way of knowing that involves a critical analysis of reality which leads to critical agency.

Analysing as an active participant and not as a simple observer involves a sense of connectedness with reality. In the classroom, critical consciousness implies a process of collective dialogue, of construction in the course of dynamic social interaction. Therefore, individuals who exhibit some level of critical consciousness may show a sense of moral education that produces a potentially liberating critical consciousness.

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TEACHERS AS LEADERS - A THEORETICAL APPROACH

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Abstract: *The importance of teachers in our societies is, no doubt, very high. The changes in education makes repeated demands on teachers and school leaders to develop new competences, and to work together in different ways to those accepted historically. Over recent years, big attention of many researches was dedicated to matters of policy in respect of teachers and school leaders. It is important to understand what makes a teacher as a leader and what are his roles in this matter.Why are we asking that ? Because developing school leaders requires clearly defining their responsibilities, providing access to appropriate professional development throughout their careers, and acknowledging their pivotal role in improving school and student performance. The aim of the paper is to present the bibliographical researches and the different roles and responsibilities of 21st century school leaders. The next question will be how can we succeeded in developing effective school leaders? The paper is the result of an Erasmus project named ”Teachers Teachers-Leaders-Teachers as Leaders and Trendsetters of Changing”.*

Keywords: *teachers role; leaders; education; changes.*

1. Introduction

Nowadays one of the bigest challenges facing education systems is implementing the changes that make schools, and therefore, nations, competitive in international and global market. But without the participation of teachers, for education changes are impossible. Therefore the knowledge, skills and attitudes of each of Europe's 6 million teachers are of great importance, because the quality of their teaching has a direct effect upon learners' attainment (Education in the EU, 2019)

The demands made on teachers, school leaders, and teacher educators are increasing and changing. They are called on to play a key role in modernising education. To do that, they need to develop their own competences. Today more than ever, a number of interconnected factors argue / show for the necessity of teacher leadership in schools.

As teachers, we often ask ourselves if we are leaders in the student's group we lead, but also in our workplace - the school organization. We all know that teacher is considered the classroom manager, but does that mean that he is also the leader? In fact, what does it mean to be a leader? Can we suppose a leader is in the same manager?

1.1. Management – Leadership - Administration

Regarding the meaning and differentiation of the manager-leader-administrator terms, there are different points of view in the literature according to the field in which they develop, but also by the geographical area to which belong (Coleman, M.&Earley P., 2005). As example, in the USA the term "administration" is placed at the highest level and is often synonymous with "leadership". On the other hand, the "educational leadership" in the USA can have, in different contexts, the same meaning as "educational administration"

"Leadership" and "management" terms can be found in different versions. Gronn (1999) considers "Leadership is differentiated qualitatively by management and administration". Leadership is presented as a quality that does not necessarily come from status, or from the job, but it is something special. On the other hand, management is considered as a formal leadership, while leadership can be regarded as an informal group, led by a leader, the head of this group. Leadership can be identified at the top of an organization, but others can as well do it at different levels of the organization.

Another approach completely differentiates the two notions. Zaleznic is the first author to make a distinction between the two categories of leaders in 1977 by the article in Harward Business Revue "Managers and Leaders: Are They Different?" (Table 1).

Tabel 1. Leaders vs. managers

Criteria	Types	
	Leaders	Managers
The goal	*Manifesting of personal and active attitudes*	Manifest impersonal, passive attitudes
Work concept	Stimulates work offers and creates possibilities for choosing it	Coordinates, balances work. Accept values compromises
Relations with others	Manifests empathy, gives meaning to actions and events	Poor emotional involvement in relationships with the others
Self-perception	Manifests a low self-identity, focusing on change	Manifesting an acute need to maintain the present order, a pronounced conservatism

John P. Kotter (1988) emphasized that management is different from leadership in that it is "more formal, more scientific, and therefore universal." In this way, management is based on a set of explicit tools and techniques, determined by analytical testing and analysis, which can be used as such in different situations, both in the business world and in the public sector.

Kotter argues that leadership is a process that aims to develop a vision for the organization; align people with that vision, and motivate people to action through the basic need fulfilment. Kotter stated that leadership is different from management, but not for the reason most people think. Leadership is not mystical or mysterious. It has nothing to do with having the charisma or other exotic personality traits. It`s not the province of a chosen few. Nor is leadership necessarily better than management or a replacement for it: rather, leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment (Kotter, 1990a).

Other opinions (Bennis and Nanus, 2012) regarding the two notions are:

•managers manage, while leaders innovate;
•the manager is a copy, the leader is the original;
•the manager maintains, the leader develops;
•the manager is based on control, the leader inspires confidence;
•the manager has short-term visions, the leader privileges long-term visions;
•the manager asks "how?" and "when?", the leader asks "what?" and "why?"

Lunenburg (2011) concluded that it is not essential that leaders are good managers and vice versa but a combination of effective leadership and management can contribute effectively in an organisation's success.

For John Kotter (1990a) leadership goes beyond routine tasks to cope with change, whereas management is a regular formal responsibility to cope with routine complexity. He argues that leadership is a process that aims to develop a vision for the organization, align people with that vision; and motivate people to action through the basic need fulfilment. Kotter stated: leadership is different from management, but not for the reason most people think. Leadership isn`t mystical or mysterious. It has nothing to do with having the charisma or other exotic personality traits. Leadership and management are two distinctive and complementary activities. Both are necessary for success in an increasingly complex and volatile business environment (Kotter, 1990a).

It is important to specify the two notions are not mutually exclusive. In practice, it is very likely that leaders and managers are characterized by the same qualities and abilities. But there is a difference, however, is the extent to which they are intertwined. Thus, there is the opinion that leaders are specific conceptual and human abilities, and managers, technical, action, operational. Also, the qualities of a leader are clearly visible in those situations that involve rapid and extensive changes in crises, while the qualities of the manager are visible in day-to-day, banal, current situations. Hence, the idea those managers predict or diminish the risks, while leaders assume these risks.

But no matter of the context in which they are used, the terms "management" and "leadership" are often used in the same sense, especially in the current speech. Even sometimes we find one of the terms used in the literature and the other in brackets as an extension of the first one.

Unlike the terms of management and leadership, the administration term implies the operationalization of everyday issues, of little importance compared to management, which involves solving far-reaching perspectives. Administration, as stated by R. Iucu (2000) means general terms for the formulation of the objective, obtaining success by preventing errors, adopting a small number of decisions for a large number of people, hierarchies and areas of wide accountability, specifying the role of arbitrator of the administrator.

Over time, the management term had over 150 definitions:

•"Provide and Plan, Organize, Lead, and Control" (Fayol),

•"Taking responsibility for deciding, planning and regulating the work of some people working for a common purpose so that the right result is efficient and economical" (Brech),

•"The process of coordinating human, informational, physical and financial resources in order to achieve the primary goal of the organization - obtaining the desired products and services of a particular segment of society" (Reece and O'Grady - USA)

•"Science of administration techniques of the enterprise" (Larousse - France), or

•"Management science deals with laws of general management and its synthetic laws" (Popova and Krasnopoiasa - Russia),

•"Management means to do the right thing, while leadership is doing what you need," says Drucker.

Some definitions define management as an art. Thus, Roy Rowan said about management ”is the art of making decisions with insufficient information." Starting from the idea that the artistic process is generally seen as having three vital aspects: craftsmanship, vision, and communication, he has come to the conclusion that the process of management is a form of art, because it achieves all three aspects: managers must have tools to perform tasks; they must have the vision to implement innovative strategies; they need to have communication skills at work and elsewhere.

1.2. Teachers leaders and leadership in education

For leadership, business dictionary presents two definition:

1. The individuals who are the leaders in an organization, regarded collectively.
2. The activity of leading a group of people or an organization or the ability to do this.

Leadership needs a clear vision, sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly, providing the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision, and coordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders.

Another definition of the leadership is the art of motivating a group of people to act towards achieving a common goal. People who lead have three common attributes:

- ✓ inspire others to share their vision;
- ✓ motivate others to act on that vision;
- ✓ encourage others and help them overcome obstacles in pursuit of that vision.

Leadership requires traits that extend beyond management duties. But leadership also involves communicating, inspiring and supervising. It`s important to say leadership doesn`t mean seniority of one`s position in the top of hierarchy of the organization. Or in another words, not all the top teams are developing leadership. As Warren Bennis say: ”Leadership is the capacity to translate vision into reality”.

Leadership provides direction for an organization and its employees which need to know the direction in which the organization is headed and who to follow to reach the destination.

Leadership involves showing employees how to effectively perform their responsibilities and regularly supervising the completion of their tasks. Leadership is also about setting a positive example for staff to follow, by being excited about the work, being motivated to learn new things, and helping out as needed in both individual and team activities.

According with Peter Drucker: "The only definition of a leader is someone who has followers. To gain followers requires influence but doesn't exclude the lack of integrity in achieving this”. Some theorists believe that leadership is no different from the social influence processes occurring among all members of a group and others believe that leadership is everything someone is doing in order to lead effective.

As a leader of an educational school, it must be find a balance between the leader dependence on teachers and their legal authority (Johnson, 1996). In finding this balance they must, over time, develop competence and co-operation for collectively leading a school and jointly ushering in change (Huffman, 2011). This implies that leaders must clearly understand their roles and those of their teachers. They cannot abdicate their responsibilities nor take over those of teachers.

But we must take care at the people who are in positions of leadership but who are not providing leadership. A leader by its meaning is one who goes first and leads by example, so that others are motivated to follow him. This is a basic requirement.

In educational environment, we can find formal and informal leadership.

Formal Leadership

Formal leadership is when a person is officially designated as the leader of a group. We can find examples as a teacher of the classroom, the head of school, the captain of a sporting team and the head of a department. His job is to organize the available resources, to work out the logistics, to coordinate and to motivate the members of the team to do their best of the abilities.

Informal Leadership

Appears when the person is not officially appointed as the head of a group. In the group the other members look to him and trust him, he motivates and inspire the informal of formal group. Sometimes, as an informal leader there is colleague who, play this role even if these leaders are not in a formal position of leadership, they are recognized as leaders by their peers.

Formal leaders have authority and certain rights and privileges that informal leaders lack. As a formal leader there is the power over the group and has the authority to discipline and punish the group members. In the same time, a formal leader could give rewards to the group. Not all of these are possible for informal leader. That`s why he has to prove charisma, he must have an open communication, a shared vision, and he must be a team guide. The informal leader led through example, individual behaviour and personality.

Sometime in schools we will find both formal and informal leader. These could be difficult to manage, because they could not share the same vision. The group has different expectations to the two leaders. Team members tend to be loyal to the formal leader because his power and authority and, on the other hand, they tend to be loyal to the informal leader because he is one of them. The informal leader has a greater commitment to the group, while the formal leader's commitment is connected with the organization. In any situation, it is important for the formal and informal leaders to work together to make sure that the group achieves the best results. In educational institutions, it is possible to appear such informal leaders that creates factions that would bid for power over influence towards formal ones. Real conflicts between formal and informal leaders arise when ineffective leadership is the cause of employee disengagement and motivation loss. This is where informal leaders are fighting against formal policies since they are powerful and they have the sympathy of the team members. That`s why is necessary to take care at the informal leaders. Because they, properly motivated, could help in managing and maintain order within the workplace as a partner of the formal organization.

There are some recommendations related to the formal versus informal leader: to use the informal leader influence as an opportunity to find on what should be adjusted in relation to the institutional policy. In the same time, formal leaders could be understood better when informal organizations are being explored by immersed in their culture.

Teacher leadership is an idea which time has come. The unprecedented demands being placed on schools today require leadership at every level. Therefore the role of the teacher leader is not only leadership between teachers but to be the students (pupils) leader, too. School leadership is the process of finding, supporting and guiding the talents and energies of other teachers, students and parents toward achieving common educational aims. Besides, the teacher leaders are defines as the „agents of changes".

The researchers suggest that teachers should see themselves as creators rather than objects of change. In many societies around the world, teachers are looked upon as the individuals who can help to bring about positive changes in the lives of people.

These change creators (agents) must be entrepreneurs, must be focused on the collaborative development of shared knowledge in learning communities, and must master system thinking in order to transform new knowledge into effecting teaching strategies and to implement them in the school curriculum.

For the 21st century education Charles Fadel (2015) identifies the three dimensions and the related challenges for curricula:

Knowledge (relevant) because it is visible the lack of motivation of the students and also the lack of involvement in the educational process. The author suggests the need to rethink the meaning and applicability of the contents in order to achieve a better balance between the theoretical and the practical part.

Higher **skills** and abilities ("21st century skills"), such as "4 C" of creativity, critical thinking, communication, collaboration. The author observes already overloaded programs with the contents, which makes them difficult for the students to exercise skills through projects**.** On the other hand, even teachers are not prepared to teach these skills

Character (behaviors, attitudes, values) - which is necessary to cope with an increasingly challenging world and to achieve performance (measured in descriptors such as adaptability, persistence, resilience) and the formation of moral traits (integrity, justice, empathy, ethics).

Meta-Learning (learning to learn, interdisciplinarity, systems thinking, personalization, etc.) - this encompasses the other three dimensions essential for establishing lifelong learning habits, activating the transfer, creating expertise, promoting creativity through analogies, increasing versatility, addressing the individual needs of students.

In order to promote the 21st century education dimension, teachers leaders must play many roles:

- **leader** for the classroom: a teacher who leads a team of teachers focused on the results of the student of the team;
- **department/content chair**: it is a interface between the school management and the others colleagues, students, parents community etc. It may include as well instructional leadership and managerial tasks ;
- **mentor and/or coach** usually for the novice teachers or for the newcomers in the school ;
- instructional specialist/ coach - which helps colleagues implement effective teaching strategies in a specific subject or for a specific student population ;

- **curriculum and/or assessment specialist and or curriculum creators** : which guides teachers to develop standards and to follow the curriculum and /or to develop standardized assessments. A teacher leader helps other teachers come up with new strategies and interesting course material to better engage students ;
- **master teacher** : which is an advanced role in a teacher's career and could have different responsibilities ;
- **professional learning** facilitator when facilitates staff professional development. They can serve as team leaders for different grade level teams, working closely with teachers and their students to gather and analyze data about teacher practices and student performance to promote the best student learning ;
- **community builders :** it is happening when a teacher leader learns about a new technique or resource and even if it's not in one's discipline, he will immediately share it. In this way, every teacher constantly improves. The idea of paying it forward creates a successful learning environmentand in the same time it creates a community ;
- ***catalyst for change.*** *Teachers who are working for a catalyst role feel secure in their own work and have a strong commitment to continual improvement ;*
- **continuing learner** in formal or in informal environment. A teacher who is a learner model and has a continual improvement, demonstrate lifelong learning, and use what they learn to help all students achieve.

All these information where accumulated in a common database, in order to develop a model for training the teachers to become leaders.

1.3. Conclusion

After we understand what is a leader and who is a leader, what are his/her roles and responsabilities, we are ready to desing the high-quality training to develop passionate, effective teachers – leaders. In the same way, we are ready to develop the concept / model of teachers - leaders as "agents of change". The question from which we are starting is: what teacher training programs are needed for the preparation of the teachers to teach according with the 21st century classroom needs ? The answers could be easy understand if we consider the redesign of the curriculum, according with la last trends in education. In the same way, we must redesign the curriculum taking account of creativity and knowledge inspired by science by companies through entrepreneurial development of new products and services, by practitioners like teachers and/orschool managersand last, but not least, by students, parents, communities.

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EDUCATION, COMMUNICATION AND LITERACIES: PEDAGOGY AND INNOVATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION IN PORTUGAL AND SPAIN

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Abstract: *Contemporary society, dominated by inexhaustible sources of information, complex social and generational changes implies that teaching and learning are increasingly associated with these transformations, implying a new teacher profile for the 21st century. The student is increasingly immersed in technology and there is a clear need to rethink the pedagogical innovation in Higher Education, namely when we associate education, pedagogy and the different literacies that must be taken to the classroom. METHOD. In order to establish a debate on what a professor needs to improve his/her teaching and get to his/her students, we have designed a questionnaire considering the main aspects on literacies in education and presented it to two target groups, one in Portugal and one in Spain. RESULTS. The results obtained are very similar in both cases: 100% of the students agreed that contemporary society needs more specific language to code and decode information and that the analysis of this information society challenges must be carried into the classroom, although they differ sometimes in the importance of one literacy or another. DISCUSSION. With this study, we can conclude that teachers in Higher Education clearly need to enhance different contemporary skills in order to correspond to the expectations of the generation of digital natives and cope with the technological and informational changes that affect the current educational system.*

Key Words: *education; communication; literacy; higher education.*

1. Introduction

Today's society has created a deep and unavoidable need to rethink the worlds of education and pedagogy, namely the integration of literacy into the teaching-learning process, which is increasingly shaped by the digital natives' generation (Prensky, 2001) and Web 4.0.

The greatest challenges of education until 2030 are clearly focused on building the skills needed to understand and interpret an increasingly complex world, take a prepared look and activate critical thinking for a more fruitful exercise in analyzing the world, the complex spaces of the communication and citizenship, as mentioned in the OECD report *The Future of Education and Skills* (2018)*:*

Unless steered with a purpose, the rapid advance of science and technology may widen inequities, exacerbate social fragmentation and accelerate resource depletion. In the 21st century, that purpose has been increasingly defined in terms of well-being. But well-being involves more than access to material resources, such as income and wealth, jobs and earnings, and housing. It is also related to the quality of life, including health, civic engagement, social connections, education, security, life satisfaction and the environment. Equitable access to all of these underpins the concept of inclusive growth.

Education has a vital role to play in developing the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values that enable people to contribute to and benefit from an inclusive and sustainable future. Learning to form clear and purposeful goals, work with others with different perspectives, find untapped opportunities and identify multiple solutions to big problems will be essential in the coming years. Education needs to aim to do more than prepare young people for the world of work; it needs to equip students with the skills they need to become active, responsible and engaged citizens (pp. 4-5)

We consider digital natives, with their natural alignment with technologies that serve as real enhancements to reading and interpreting the world, with an ever-growing blend of written, verbal, sound, and image, are a major challenge for the teacher. In the same way, as this new student shows an appetite for these platforms and technologies, there is a corresponding need to provide the literacy skills to correctly encode and decode the information he receives and generates. At the same time, the teacher has to meet these challenges, with a primary focus on mastering new literacy and its subsequent teaching as a tool to understand this new world. As outlined in the European Commission's *The Changing Pedagogical Landscape: New ways of teaching and learning and their implications for higher education policy* (2015), this is a joint effort between higher education institutions and teachers, who are and should be indispensable to this process of change supported by educational innovations:

One clear message has come through the discussion about innovation pedagogies and technologies: carried out requires committed and informed teachers, and a prerequisite of that is that high-quality teaching is valued by universities and by funders alongside research (Boyer, 1997) must either result in, or be accompanied by, appropriate reward and recognition systems for university teachers (p. 17).

UNESCO (2013) advocates the essential contribution of teachers to ensuring that all citizens are able to access, evaluate and share information, as citizens with literacy skills contribute to the goals of sustainable development, better living conditions, employment, income *per capita*, gross domestic product, industrialization and development of a country's infrastructure.

For UNESCO, teachers are key elements for change:

UNESCO recognizes that teachers in service and in training are key players in building knowledge societies. In order to teach and prepare young people for tomorrow's world, teachers themselves need to be empowered, their needs addressed and supported. As UNESCO considers MIL an essential part of 21st century competencies, the MIL Assessment Framework intends to provide not only policy makers and decision makers and relevant educational planning and teacher training institutions with accurate and reliable data on MIL, but also to supply individual teachers with tools for self-assessment and self-improvement (p. 38).

Given the vertigo of technological development and its consequences for society and the growth of students, there is an urgent need to harmonize education and training in order to adequately qualify teachers at all levels of education, including higher education, to face these challenges and a public plunged into this ocean of technologies, information and permanent changes.

One of the most important changes is to broaden the study of literacies, from childhood to higher education students. UNESCO (2017) presentsuswiththefollowingthoughtonLiteracy:

First, what is meant by literacy? UNESCO has given several definitions, notably in 1958, 1978 and in 2005. The first two definitions focused on the capacity to read and write a simple sentence, whereas by 2005 UNESCO had moved to a broader understanding of literacy, recognizing that the complexity of the phenomenon meant that any definition could not claim to be universal. As a working definition and in the context of assessing literacy, a meeting of experts adopted the following formulation: "Literacy is the ability to identify, understand, interpret, create, communicate and compute, using printed and written materials associated with various contexts. Literacy involves a continuum of learning in enabling individuals to achieve his or her goals, develop his or her knowledge and potential, and participate fully in community and wider society." (UNESCO 2005a:21) (…) This review also uses a brief encapsulation of literacy as 'communication involving text'. Literacy 'involves text' because text is increasingly mixed with other modes, such as image and symbol, across manuscript, print and electronic media. Literacy is 'communication' since its function and value lie in communicating with others or oneself, alongside verbal and non-verbal modes. (p. 13.)

Literacy is a key competence to understand information, communication and society. The different literacies offer the teachers and the students a wide range of tools to work with today's challenges that all around us. Bringing literacies to school is to empower both teachers and students into the future. Thus, higher education can no longer consider them as secondary instruments to carry out the teaching objectives. Universities need to embrace literacies in curricula and classes so that students can enter the professional world with up to date skills. UNESCO (2017) warnsusforthefollowing:

(…) the adolescent today who has not achieved basic literacy and numeracy skills through schooling and who catches up through non-formal learning must move quickly to master the skills necessary for processing digital data and information. The speed of the development and adoption of ICTs requires equally fast learning: 'In an extremely dynamic global market where products and processes change rapidly, basic education in literacy and numeracy, as well as fast and efficient, continued learning are critical' (UNDP 2015: 130). The question is how will literacy be best developed in the light of ever-evolving demands on its use? Clearly, all of the well-known strategies such as identifying the purposes of literacy, its place in communication patterns, mother-tongue-based multilingual approaches and embedding literacy learning in the learning of other skills will continue to be foundational to address learners' needs in relevant and context-sensitive ways. It is perhaps the last feature – embedding literacy with other learning – that will count for the most since it proposes a learning mode that directly connects with prospective uses of literacy. (p. 73)

In the context of literacy, in a first paradigm, the approach between teacher and digital literacy was introduced as the first bridge between education and pedagogy innovation. However, this paradigm is not enough to address the multiple challenges in today's society, with complex networking and an ever-increasing ability to generate information across multiple platforms. Moreira (2016, p.72) advocates a new paradigm characterized by the fusion of pedagogy and technology and encourages the development of multicity depending on the multiplicity of communication channels , and corresponding forms of differentiated communication, citing Amasha advocating an educational methodology through the development of multi-literacy, enabling individualized analysis skills in multimodal texts and even finding new textual approaches.

Provided that this second paradigm is our preferred horizon, it is also relevant to look at the teacher in this 21st century. Garba, Byabazaire and Busthami (2015) identifytwomajor ideas:

In a 21st-century learning environment, digital electronic communication technology is the key factor. Teaching and learning have to centrearound the innovative use of existing and emerging technologies. Two things are therefore necessary for building the much desired 21st-century learning environment for our digital natives of the information age (21st-century learners). First, providing the basic ICT infrastructure and facilities and getting teachers to use the facilities in teaching and learning. The second thing is getting the teachers to adopt the use of 21st-century teaching-learning approaches and methods in their classroom practices. Teachers and technology are therefore the key role players in a 21st-century learning environment. Basic ICT infrastructure and facilities in 21st-century learning environment go beyond the provision of internet connectivity and one or two computer labs for the schools. (p. 8)

Therefore, we truly need to reflect upon the XXI century skills for teachers and one of the main reasons is the opinion of the students, the key issue in this paper to determine how much we need to focus on this matter. In order to gather the thoughts and proposals from the students, we engaged a double work, in Portugal and Spain, to find out what are the most important ideas about education, communication and literacies in higher education.

2. Method

We inquired a target group so that we could discover what do students think about literacies in higher education, namely in class, the profile of the teacher in this society of emerging literacies and the needs of the students on this matter. In Portugal, we inquired 21 students who recently concluded their degree in Journalism and Communication at the School of Education and Social Sciences of the Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre. We chose these students due to their proximity to these matters (communication, education, literacies) and for their knowledge of higher education teaching and learning. In Spain, we selected 21 students from the Degree of Primary Education of the University School of Osuna, Sevilla, because they have the experience of a full degree in their higher education learning plan.

The inquiry was anonymous and included questions with different answers to choose from, ending with an open question to allow us to gather deeper ideas about our main objectives. All the 42 students cooperated and gave us the basis for the following analysis.

3. Results

In the Portuguese case, we conducted a survey of 21 students graduated from the Higher School of Education and Social Sciences of the Polytechnic Institute of Portalegre, of the Journalism and Communication course, due to its close proximity to the subject matter, namely the information society.

Regarding the first question, we point out that 57.1% of graduates consider that contemporary society increasingly requires specific knowledge to encode and decode information, while 42.9% partially agree. In short, all respondents agree with the expressed idea. These results are reinforced by the percentage of respondents (76.2%) who fully agree that the challenges of this information society should be analyzed in the classroom, in conjunction with 23.8% who agree partially, which emphasizes this clear idea of analysis in the classroom (100%).

We then delved into the subject matter and the objectives of our survey and asked the graduates to comment on the relevance of Literacies, identifying the statements with which they agreed. The statements were as follows: a) Literacy is the specific knowledge about a particular specific knowledge; b) literacy is a necessary knowledge in contemporary society; c) literacy must be taught at all levels of education; d) literacy must be taught in higher education. Claims b) and c) obtained the highest percentages (66.7%), followed by affirmation a), with 33.3% and statement d) with 28.6%.

As far as the knowledge of the graduates about the different Literacies, we can verify that the most known are Digital and Audiovisual / Film Literacies (85.7%), followed by Media Literacy (76.2%), Literacy and Critical Thinking %) and Information Literacy (57.1%).

Next, we asked graduates to rate the relevance of Literacies in terms of teaching on a scale of 1 to 5 in Higher Education. Digital literacy received 52.4% of level 5 responses, followed by 8 levels 4 responses (38.1%) and 1 level 3 and 2 level responses (4.8%). Media Literacy collected 12 level 4 responses (57.1%), 7 level 5 responses (33.3%) and 2 level 3 responses (9.5%). Information Literacy had 8 level 5 and level 4 responses (38.1%), 4 levels 3 responses (19%) and a level 1 response (4.8%). Audiovisual / film literacy collected 11 responses from level 4 (52.4%), 5 from level 5 (23.8%) and 5 from level 3 (23.8%). Literacy and Critical Thinking obtained 11 responses from level 5 (52.4%) and 10 from level 4 (47.6%), with literacy being better known to graduates.

We also wanted to know what literacies the graduates felt the Higher Education teacher should know. Once again, Literacy and Critical Thinking achieved the best result, with 90.5%, followed by Informative Literacy (66.7%), Digital and Media Literacies (61.9%) and Audiovisual / Film Literacy (33.3%).

Regarding the interests of the graduates, we found that they prioritized, once again, Literacy and Critical Thinking (52.4%), which they would like to know better. This is followed by Information Literacy (38, 1%), Audiovisual / Film Literature and Digital Literature (33.3%) and Media Literacy (28.6%).

The last open question allowed respondents to explain their opinion more deeply about the competencies that higher education teachers must have to meet the challenges of contemporary society. Gathering the answers, we were able to define a teacher profile for Higher Education. This profile includes the following characteristics: information on contemporary society to know how to explain and teach, updated knowledge; dynamism; learn to captivate students; have training in literacy and critical thinking; to be perseverant; receptive to student opinion; be open to debate in the classroom, with a view to sharing and exchanging ideas and opinions that enrich knowledge and stimulate the thinking and critical vision of all; know the new media; open mind; have a wide range of skills and abilities, not only at a theoretical but also behavioral level, insofar as it is essential for human relations; to follow the various developments of society, be they cultural, computer, technological; innovation and creativity; make formations about the areas they teach; promoting the development of students' skills, research and innovation; have a deep critical sense; look at the student as someone capable of responding to their challenges. In short, the higher education teacher must be someone who can inspire the student to succeed. In the domain of the various literacies of 21st-century society, it is fundamental to combine a "humanist" literacy that allows the student to feel that the teacher is "close".

In the Spanish case, a survey was carried out among 21 Spanish students of the last year of the Primary Education Degree of the University School of Osuna, Seville. We have chosen this group for having already had a complete tour of their university education and to eliminate the possibility that training in different literacies could occur at another time along the route.

Regarding the first question, it should be noted that 65.5% of students agree with the statement: Contemporary society requires more and more specific knowledge to decode and encode information, with the remaining option marked "34.8%" in agreement". There is, therefore, no student who is in complete disagreement. This percentage "totally agrees" grows when responding to the statement: "The challenges of this information society must be analyzed in the classroom" (78.3%), not having marked again anyone "in disagreement".

The next block of affirmations related to literacies throws again interesting results on the subject of study. On this occasion the students were asked to mark the statements with which they were more in agreement among the following: a) literacy is knowledge about a specific knowledge, b) literacy is a necessary knowledge in contemporary society, c) literacy must be taught at all educational levels, d) literacy must be taught at the university. The number of students (21) that pointed to option c) stands out in our case, being the most chosen with 91.3%. Next, the most popular was option b, marked by 17 students, a total of 73.9%. At a great distance is option a), chosen by 30.4% (7 students) and d), with which only 4 students agree (17.4%).

Among the most familiar literacies recalled by the students interviewed, it stands out with a clear difference (91.3%), that indicated by 21 students: digital literacy. The rest move in a spectrum that moves between the 12 students (52.2%) who pointed out the media and information literacies, the 13 (56.5%) who know the audiovisual or film literacy and the 15 (65.2%). %) that have marked the option of literacy and critical thinking.

The following series of assessments allow us to delve into this aspect, focusing on which are the most important literacies, from the point of view of students, within the university teachings.

Literacy and critical thinking are the best valued by the students interviewed, with 69.6% of its highest value (5). Next, there would be information literacy, with 65.2% and digital literacy, with 52.2%. A great distance would be the media competition, indicated at the highest point of the scale by 30.4% and audiovisual-film (26.1%).

If we place ourselves in the opposite value (1), only positive responses have been detected in the critical thinking literacy, marked by 2 students and the audiovisual-film, marked by 1 student.

Describing the answers for each of the literacies, the first of them, dedicated to digital literacy, it is distributed among the highest values (3 to 5), highlighting as we have indicated before the 52.2% that has marked the 5, followed by 39.1% who scored 4 and 8.7% (only 2 students) who scored 3, as the lowest value for this literacy.

The media competition has much more shared its values, although in no case has its importance been assessed with the lowest score (1). Thus, highlights the 39.1% (9 students) who have scored the 4, followed by 30.4% (7 students) that have marked the 5. At a distance are placed 3, with 17.4% (4 students) and 2, 13% (3 students)

The values for information literacy stand out for the difference that is established between the three options marked: 65.2% (15 students) have opted for the highest rating (5), compared to the remaining 34.8% that is shared between the 4: 26.1% (6 students) and 2: 8.7% (2 students).

Audiovisual - film literacy is characterized by having obtained responses in all its values, with the three highest scores remaining fairly even: 34.8% scored 4, 30.7% scored 3 and 26.1% scored 5. A quite a distance are placed equal options 1 and 2, marked by two students (one each), which is 4.3% respectively.

The difference between the values is especially evident in the critical thinking literacy, where the value 5 shoots up with 69.9%, with the remaining answers distributed between the value 4 (17.4%) and 1 (8.7%).) and 3 (4.3%), leaving 2 unchecked.

About the literacies that the university professor should know, stand out especially with 91.3% (21 students) information literacy and literacy and critical thinking, followed by digital literacy (60.9%). At a certain distance, media literacy (39.1%) and audiovisual-film (34.8%.

With regard to the literacies that they would like to know better, literacy and critical thinking stand out, with 65.2%, followed by an audiovisual - film (56.5%), informational (43.5%), media literacy (34.8%) and digital (30.4%).

The last question is open so that students could freely express the skills they believe university professors should have to face the challenges of contemporary society. It was sought with this question that students could complete aspects that had not been addressed in the previous sections and on those who would like to draw attention. It highlights the affirmation of several of the respondents about the need to have a much greater informational competence, also based on critical thinking that starts from the very reflection of the teaching of the subject, which translates into a greater ability to transmit knowledge, based on the practice and creation of localized cases in current and real contexts. In addition, it emphasizes the need for university teachers to empathize with their students and update themselves to try to give them the most accurate training possible, which will help them to face the problems that will arise in their future professional practice. It even goes so far as to affirm the need to value the students, to listen to them and adapt "(whenever possible)" the methodologies. Likewise, we would like to highlight two of the statements collected and that have seemed especially significant to us: "Knowing your subject perfectly and knowing how to teach your class as if it were the most important subject" and "Vocation. Professionalism."

4. Discussion

About questions 1 and 2, both groups have agreed 100% that contemporary society needs more specific language to code and decode information and that the analysis of this information society challenges must be carried into the classroom. This leads us to our very first conclusion: students are concerned about the need for basic training on working with information, considering it as a main competence that must be acquired independently from the chosen degree.

On questions 3 and 4, we asked them about their knowledge of literacies obtaining some interesting results. Around 30% of the students interviewed affirms that literacy is knowledge of a specific area. The double (66.7% in the Portuguese case and 75% in the Spanish one) consider literacy as an essential knowledge in contemporary society, but they all not agree in the need of being taught in every educational level. The 66.7% of the Portuguese students marked this option, opposite to the Spanish ones (91.7%). This fact is concreted by the next option, regarding the need of being taught only in Higher Education, being chosen by 28.6% of the Portuguese students and 16.7% of Spanish. When we asked them about the literacies they know, we found a big gap between Portuguese and Spanish students with a positive difference of nearly 20-25% on some literacies: 76.2% versus 54.2% on media literacy, 85.7% versus 54.2% on audiovisual-film literacy. In general, we can observe a wider knowledge of the literacies in the Portuguese case, which would explain the differences found in the previous question. This leads us to the second conclusion: Portuguese students don't consider the teaching of literary at every educational level as important as the Spanish ones because they already know most of them. The main topic here will be on how they have acquired that knowledge and the different ways students acquired them along their life, not only at school.

Questions 5, 6 and 7 are focused on the relevance the different literacies have in education. The items who have obtained the maximum grade in question 5 (on the relevance of literacies in higher education) are the same in both countries: digital literacy (54.4% Portugal, 50% Spain) and critical thinking (52.4%, Portugal, 70.8%, Spain). This idea is reinforced by the results obtained in question 6, related to the literacies that must be known by the higher education professor, where critical thinking occupies the top place in both countries (90.5%, Portugal; 91.7%, Spain) and digital literacy the third place (61.9% and 58.3), obtaining a very similar result.

Furthermore, some interesting differences in the results obtained from question 5 are the ones regarding information literacy and literacy and critical thinking. In the case of information literacy, Portuguese students have marked this option only in 38.1% of the cases, versus the Spanish ones, who have chosen it in 91.7%. Something similar has occurred in the option critical thinking, which has received the highest grade from 70.8% of the Spanish students and 52.4% of the Portuguese, although it is a very popular option in both cases. This stands in the same line as the results obtained in question 6, referred to the literacies that must be known by the Higher Education professor. The value given to Information Literacy (66.7%, Portugal; 91.7%, Spain) is a very interesting detail considering that the target group in the Portuguese case is composed of Journalism students, opposite to the Spanish ones who are coursing a degree in Education. We can also detect some fluctuations in the appreciation of and media literacies (61.9% versus 41.7%); remaining the same in audiovisual and film literacies in both countries (33.3%).

About question 7, on which literacies would the students know better, the winner is again critical thinking (52.4%, Portugal; 66.7%, Spain), followed by audiovisual-film literacy and information literacy. It is interesting to check how the same results keep appearing, giving special attention to critical thinking, not only to be known by teachers but also by students. This leads us to the third conclusion: digital and critical thinking literacies are highly valued by university students, is considered the most important ones for their training.

Question 8 is an open question where we have given the students the opportunity to share their ideas on the skills the professor must have to face contemporary social challenges. In both groups, we can find very similar qualities: critical thinking, reflection on the teaching process, updating, deep knowledge of the subject, openness to debate in class, open mind, a wide range of professional and human skills, creativity, critical sense and being an inspiration for his/her students.

5. Conclusion

All this data leads us to the last and main conclusion of this article: considering the results obtained, we can affirm that the main competence that a professor must accomplish and apply at any degree is critical thinking, involving a deep knowledge of the subject taught based on a developed information competence mostly obtained from special digital abilities, an open mind hearing for the students' opinions to promote the debate and encourage students' own critical thinking. In addition, the nowadays professor should be prepared to face a generation who manages almost perfectly digital, media and audiovisual/film literacies.

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PROFESSIONAL ADVANCEMENT IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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Abstract: *The purpose of the following paper is to investigate the attitudes of foreign language teachers in secondary schools in Novi Sad towards professional advancement. The study was conducted by means of a survey, which included three main parts. The total number of 28 language teachers, with varying levels of education, years of experience, and gender took part in the research and according to the findings the most attended activities are workshops, seminars and teaching portfolios; whereas the least attended consist of team teaching, analysis of critical incidents, and case analysis. Furthermore, the findings suggest that the highest rated importance as well as efficiency strategies also contained workshops and seminar. Concerning low rated importance and efficiency strategies, they are self-monitoring, and analyzing critical incidents. Finally, the survey asked the participants for their suggestions for the professional development, which are discussed further in the paper.*

Key words: *foreign language teachers; professional development; workshops; seminars; portfolios.*

Introduction

"In the 21st century society has turned into one where knowledge and information are the core elements in competitiveness for both individuals and nations, as well as serve as the sources for creating value." (Juszczyk 2006:15). Likewise, one of the preconditions of the free flow of knowledge is successful communication which means mastering foreign languages especially English language as lingua franca of modern society. Therefore, "once knowledge has been created it needs to be properly disseminated and used, if it is to create more value." (Juszczyk ibid.:18). Consequently, the knowledge of foreign languages helps in the immersion into the global educational context as well. Since there has emerged a necessity to be able to communicate in English for different purposes, including business, engineering, tourism as well as education, the professional development of language teachers plays an important role as teachers are seen as *motivators,* *guides* and *facilitators* in the language learning process. The current research presents data of the beliefs and attitudes of language teachers towards professional development. The future studies intend to thoroughly explore the experiences of language teachers during a particular activity such as workshops, seminars, etc.

Freeman and Richards (1996) state that ESL/EFL teaching can be considered only with paying attention to the contextual variables, such as language learning strategies, learners' educational and cultural backgrounds, teachers' beliefs and assumptions, etc. However, according to Burton (2009) until recently the central part of much of research in ESL/EFL contexts was students' learning and achievement and argues - how teachers (both pre- and in-service teachers) learn to teach has received little attention of researchers until a decade ago. Johnson (1999: 45) claimed that: "language teacher education was something we have always done, almost intuitively, but not studied". Indeed, there was not much literature on teacher learning and development, especially in Serbian context.

Because of the lack of research on teacher learning, many ESL researchers and scholars are focused on how teachers learn to teach (and why), what teachers know, and why teachers do what they do in real teaching contexts, e.g. (Freeman and Richards 1996; Kojić et. al. 2019; Richards 1998). As a result, teachers are now viewed as "people who construct their own personal and workable theories of teaching" (Basturkmen et al. 2004: 224), rather than "people who master a set of general principles and theories developed by experts" (Basturkmen et al. ibid). Consequently, teaching is now conceptualized as a complex activity, which includes teachers' action, thought and the interaction of the two in socio-cultural contexts, e.g. (Basturkmen et al. 2004; Borg 2003; Johnson 1999). Juszczyk (2003: 175) points out that "teacher should focus on crucial points of discussion, ask questions, estimate students responses, synthesize and summarize points, and help take advantage of the readings and class resources" seems to be highly relevant in foreign language teaching activity as well.

Second language teacher education is a term that was originally used by Richards (1990) to account for the preparation of language teachers. As he declares "the intent of second language teacher education must be to provide opportunities for the novice to acquire the skills and competencies of efficient teachers and to discover the working rules that efficient teachers use." (Richards ibid.: 15). It can be noticed that main participants of a language teacher program are inexperienced teachers, who are new to the profession and need guidance and support in building blocks of efficient teaching. "Pre-service training", "initial teacher training" and "initial teacher education" are other names for this concept.

It is undeniable that teachers need regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skills, i.e. the opportunities for professional development. According to Richards (2005) teachers need to take part in activities such as

- engaging in self-reflection and evaluation
- developing specialized knowledge and skills about many aspects of teaching
- expanding their knowledge base about research, theory and issues in teaching

•taking on new roles and responsibilities, such as supervisor or mentor teacher, teacher-researcher, or materials writer
•developing collaborative relationships with other teachers

While most of the activities listed above address the development of more experienced teachers, "developing specialized knowledge and skills about many aspects of teaching" can be said to target the novice teachers. Teacher education programs, thus, should provide participants with the required knowledge and skills to be applied in real classrooms and the ability to "engage in self-reflection and evaluation", which according to Burton (2009) assists teachers' lifelong professional development, forming a critical attitude to one's own teaching and enabling to make better teaching decisions.

Research methodology

The study employed a survey which consisted of three parts. In Part 1 the participants were asked to mark activities according to whether they have taken part in it or not. Part 2 requested language teachers to rate the importance as well as efficiency of the stated activities on a 5 point Likert scale, with 1 being unimportant/least efficient, and 5 - very important/most efficient. Part 3 included suggestions of language teachers in secondary schools for professional development.

The participants were 28 foreign language teachers in secondary schools in Novi Sad with varying levels of education, years of experiences, and gender.

Research findings

Part 1

The following tables list the distribution of the participants according to years of experience, level of education, gender.

Table 1. Participants according to the years of experience

Years of experience	number of participants
0-5	9
6-10	8
11-15	5
16-20	3
20 and more	3

Table 2. Participants according to the level of education

Level of Education	number of participants
BA	25
MA candidates	2
MA	1

Table 3. Participants according to gender

Gender	number of participants
Male	4
Female	24

A further analysis of the survey data reveals that the most attended activities for professional development appears to be *workshops* and *seminars. Teaching portfolios* is cited third by the language teachers. Regarding the least attended activities, they include *case analysis, analyzing critical incidents,* and *team teaching*. Moreover, the activities were also ranked according to their importance for the professional development of language teachers. Based on the results, the top ranked methods entail *workshops*, *seminars, action research, teaching portfolio,* and *case analysis.* On the other hand, the lowest rated activities are comprised of *peer observation, self-monitoring, analyzing critical incidents,* and *team teaching*. The statistical data is presented below in Tables 4-7.

Table 4. Most attended activities

Activity	number of appearances	%
Workshops	25	89.28%
Seminars	23	82.14%
Teaching portfolios	20	71.43%

Table 5: Least attended activities

Activity	**number of appearances**	**%**
Case analysis	3	10.71%
Analyzing critical incidents	3	10.71%
Team teaching	2	7.14%

Table 6. Highest rated activities

Activity	**Importance rating**
Workshops	4.86
Seminars	4.82
Action research	4.21
Teaching portfolio	3.32
Case analysis	3.28
Keeping a teaching journal	3.28

Table 7. Lowest rated activities

Activity	**Importance rating**
Peer observation	2.75
Self monitoring	2.50
Analyzing critical incidents	2.46
Team teaching	2.39

Part 2

Below is the list of three most efficient and three least efficient activities that foreign language teachers pointed out in the survey.

Table 8. Most efficient activities

Activity	Efficiency rating
Workshops	4.78
Teaching portfolios	4.75
Seminars	4.11

Table 9. Least efficient activities

Activity	Efficiency rating
Team teaching	3.36
Keeping a teaching journal	2.89
Case analysis	2.57
Analyzing critical incidents	2.36
Self-monitoring	2.32

Discussion

One of the noticeable elements in the results is that two most attended activities, *workshops* and *seminars,* also appear at the top of the most important as well as efficient activity list. An inference that can be drawn from such a coincidence is that these activities were most familiar to language teachers, which in turn resulted in the highest grade. Therefore, a further investigation into these strategies is needed to obtain more precise data. Regarding the statements to support their answers, language teachers believe that both *workshops* and *seminars* are "*best techniques to share experience and to see somebody's discoveries in teaching*". In addition, the duration of these activities is also thought to be an advantage, as it allows participants "to *learn as much as possible in a relatively short period".* Another benefit of workshops and seminars is that they "*promote creativity and innovation*". Thus, it is possible to conclude that these two strategies for professional development are ultimate by nature, as they provide not only grounds for growth and progress of novice teachers by means of short-term input of experiences of colleagues, but also practical implications to be used in a classroom. Nevertheless, several teachers think that the approach to seminars in Serbia sometimes lacks innovations, as we "*share anything but obvious things*". Additionally, it is stated that usually during seminars "*there is not enough time to* *discuss each case and the ways of how to apply them in real classrooms*". Finally, one teacher makes a rather radical statement by saying: "*usually the information one gets during a workshop is never applied in practice*". Such comments by teachers should interest teacher educators and organizers in terms of the efficient implementation of these strategies for the purpose of professional development of foreign language teachers.

Regarding the *teaching portfolio,* an interesting fact about this activity is that it was one of the most attended activities with 20 appearances (71.43%) according to the survey results but it was one of low rated strategies with a mean of 3.32 which stands for *moderately important.* Most of the teachers consider *teaching portfolios* as the most efficient activity (efficiency rating 4.75) as well as a means of collecting useful resources. However, none of the responses mention any kind of reflection or review, which is stressed by Richards (2005). In addition, the aspect of peer coaching or collaboration with other teachers has also been omitted. This leads to an assumption that language teachers in secondary schools in Novi Sad are not familiar with the latter two characteristics of a *teaching portfolio* and use it only to gather practical materials which can be reused later. Finally, one of the participants mentions the certification that teachers go through, and says that teaching portfolios have this aim only, i.e. contribution to somebody's progress in career.

Concerning the least attended activities, namely *team teaching,* its importance was also rated the lowest with a mean of 2.39. Most of the teachers believe that this strategy for professional development is average efficient (3.36) in a way that having two teachers in a class *"is not productive when they have different views*". However, teachers are missing an important aspect of *team teaching,* which involves two teachers sharing the responsibility for teaching a class. As Richards (2005) states, this method is comprised of "team planning, team teaching and team follow up", which does not necessarily suppose two teachers teaching simultaneously. Therefore, it is possible to infer that the fact that *team teaching* was among the least attended activity affected the answers of teachers so that they started to deem it as a method of two teachers teaching at the same time. On the contrary, one participant mentioned an acronym for TEAM, which stands for *Together Everyone Achieves More* and added: *"when teachers share responsibilities, it generates a lot of ideas"*. It can be said that this teacher assumes what Richards (ibid.: 161) states for the benefits of *team teaching,* which include "collegiality, different roles, combined expertise, teacher-development opportunities and learner benefits".

Another less attended activity, *peer observation,* is presented as a dichotomy: two participants cited it in the most efficient strategies list by saying that through peer observation a teacher gets useful ideas and advice and thus may develop professionally. However, other two teachers believe that *"peer observation may lead to stress*" or lack of self-confidence. Bearing in mind some previous research (Banđur-Mandić, et. al., 2019), it is possible to assume that teachers in this study consider the issue of control somehow related to *peer observation.*

Moreover, another probability is that teachers are not familiar with approaches to peer observation that comprises such characteristics as nonjudgmental listening and possible implication of certain action of the teacher as well as offering and assisting teachers in finding other ways of doing things. It is claimed that a more considerable result could be obtained by means of collaboration with other teachers. In addition, the need to think scientifically is also present in this strategy as one reviews, reflects and changes his/her teaching.

Lastly, *analyzing critical incidents* received more negative comments than positive. Language teachers suppose that critical incidents happen rarely and offer to combine this activity with *journal writing,* to be able to review and analyze events that take place in the classroom. On the other hand, two of the teachers mentioned the beneficial aspect of this strategy. They stated that *"it allows finding a reason and solution of the occurring incident and avoids them in the future"*. This brings to an inference, that teachers are aware of the advantages of *analyzing critical incidents* for the professional development.

A further classification was done according to the rating that teachers gave to each activity. A definition of terms was provided so that they could read and presumably rate the importance of the activity for the professional development of language teachers. *Workshops* and *seminars* have been already discussed in the paper; concerning *action research,* it can be said that teachers are quite informed about this strategy as they believe that teacher may become more knowledgeable about the situation in the classroom and may learn whether the students are making any progress. Furthermore, a practical element is also included in teachers' comments as they state that *action research* allows for the implementation of ideas in the classroom. Obviously, by ideas teachers mean interventions that teachers may have to take in order to see whether some techniques and methods are useful for the learners or not. *Keeping a teaching journal* was given a moderately importance rating of 3.28. However, it was also assessed as average efficient activity of 2.89. On one hand, teachers argue that *a teaching journal* helps to review and analyze teaching activity, whereas others think that due to be efficient a teacher should have sufficient methodology knowledge. Otherwise, the reasoning in a journal will lack logic and consistence and will mostly be based on subjective judgments.

One of the noticeable features of teachers' comments is that they rarely mention, *self-monitoring,* which represents an individual-type of professional development. However, those who do, state the importance of feedback for the progress. As for *self-monitoring* one teacher made a personal reflection about the times he began teaching by saying that great deal of his teaching skills and knowledge are due to his personal efforts to develop better communication strategies and get along with his students. Moreover, he stated that his own critical judgment and recognition of shortcomings "*taught him how to teach efficiently and monitor students*". Thus, we can observe several functions of self monitoring mentioned here, which is providing awareness about personal teaching style as well as approach to difficulties and also acquiring basic skills of classroom management.

A risk for false analysis is mentioned for another strategy, *case analysis,* which is also present in writing journal entries. Furthermore, another teacher claims that the documentation and assessment of each case will require a significant amount of time, which is quite hard to allocate in today's teachers' lives.

Regarding Part 3 of the survey, where teachers were asked to cite their suggestions for professional development, teachers refer to the significance of the concentration on teaching activity. Some of the teachers believe that documentation and paper work, which take a lot of time, are useless and that they increase the load that teachers already have. Others propose obligatory *peer observation* and attendance of *workshops/seminars*. A novice teacher mentioned the importance of having "up-to-date" knowledge about techniques and methods as well as the need to learn from more experienced teachers. Another teacher recommends organizing mini-seminars dedicated to "how-to" skills. Particularly, she offers educative seminars on *"how to keep teaching portfolios, etc*." Finally, three experienced teacher state that teachers should participate in any of the available activities as often as possible.

Conclusion

The current study attempted to identify the attitudes of secondary school foreign language teachers in Novi Sad towards professional development. Judging by the findings of the research, it is possible to assume that most of the teachers are aware of most of the activities. However, they fail to reason or forget to mention several functions of the activities, which lead to an assumption that there is a need to introduce these strategies during workshops/seminars; a point which was also mentioned by one of the participants. Concerning the statistics, an interesting pattern emerges for teaching portfolios. It was among well attended activities (71.43%) and high efficiency rating (4.75) but was rated moderately important (3.32) at the same time. Furthermore, *team teaching,* the least attended activity (7.14%) was rated the lowest for its importance (2.39), but most of the teachers believe that this strategy is average efficient (3.36) in teaching activity. Thus, we can assume that special training is needed for language teachers to acquire the basic skills of professional development which is not short term, but a life-long activity. Teachers' suggestions in Part 3 contain references to specific strategies for professional development, and one teacher has a harmonious point of view with the researcher by saying that there is a need to organize "how-to" seminars and show language teachers the ways to develop professionally.

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DOES THE PSYCHO-PEDAGOGICAL MODULE TRAIN REAL SKILLS?

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Abstract: *Thehereby paper aims to investigate the academic satisfaction degree of thepsycho-pedagogical module graduates concerining the within formed competences and skills. One started from the assumption: the students who go through the psycho-pedagogical module are pleased with this, because they are trained, in addition to the specific competences,also a series of transversal competences, importantfor life. The research group comprised 221 students (1st, 2nd, 3rd academic years- bachelor's degree), students who have completed or are about to complete the psycho-pedagogical module. High level of statistical correlations were found: .904 **, .905 **, .906 ** (p- 0.01) between the degree of satisfaction and the competences formed.*

Key words: *students; the psycho-pedagogical module; didactic competences; skills; transversal competences; degree of satisfaction.*

1. Introduction

The teacher is the most important factor in fulfilling the values of a society. The quality of teaching training systems has a great impact in educating future generations, generations that will continue and develop the community's life. However, from past to the present, the criteria that are introduced and implemented in the training of teachers are often contradictory and insufficient, although the process of teacher training is a key process for the quality of teaching in schools (Atac, 2008). In recent years, problems related to the quality of teacher training have led many states to reconsider their teacher training systems and begin their reform. One of the goals set by the European Union, in the Europe 2020 Strategy, is to grow smarter through more efficient investments in education, research and innovation. Moreover, European educational policies set out specific objectives aimed at: improving the quality and efficiency of education and training systems in the EU, improving the quality of education and training of teachers and trainers, developing new skills regarding the social understanding and knowledge of society, ensuring access to digital competences, for teachers (Stăiculescu, 2013). Thus, within the Ministry of National Education all the components of the teacher training system, must be evaluated through a constant process and must be continuously improved for the training of qualified teachers. (Tarhan, 2015).

2. Background

If we take into consideration the demands of the labour market and also the learners expectations regarding teacher training, they would focus on the following aspects: the needs of future teachers and trainers for practical training and support activities for future teachers, and the learninginstitutions (Gabureanu, 2015). The results of the research show that there are five factors that influence the effectiveness of teacher training: 1) school preparation, 2) external school factor, 3) the preparation plan, 4) the training process, 5) the supervisory process of the supervisors (Erawan, 2015). To begin with the stated requirements and factors, the teacher training process includes psycho-pedagogical training, teaching the school discipline, as well as knowing the different aspects of life. School education for future generations needs teachers, whoare able to reflect on the memories of theirown childhood and adolescence, to deepen the awareness of social roles when they were students, and to rethink their practice, as future teachers, in order to build their own professional identity (Sales de Melo, 2015). Teacher's training is a key component of high quality education (Buchberger, Campos, Kallós, Stephenson, 2000). We can also discuss the aspect of transfer in teacher's training, because it shows how trainees (beginner teachers) apply the trained skills. From this point of view, we can also talk about the motivation of transfer.

In the modern education system, the practical implementation of a learning process oriented to the student's personality is one of the strategic priorities. The implementation of a learning process that is oriented to the personality of the students, will be possible if the training is conceived as an activity of communicative and cognitive learning for the teaching staff and for the students as well, aiming at their development (Jumagalieva, Kussainova, Aitjanova, 2014). Teachers have multiple roles that they must play today. In order to perform their roles professionally, teachers need to have competencies in terms of responsibilities towards their students, in the classroom and outside the classroom. An important roleteachers play is to provide students with guidance and counseling (Wai, 2014). The advent of information and communication technology has created opportunities to improve the learning process at different educational levels (Lucas, 2017). Educating the teachers with the new technologies is seen as a consolidation of the educational practice (Tondeur, 2018) or as a way of modifying the curriculum and adapting the teaching-learning process to the students (Pegalajar Palomino, 2017).

Teachers play a very important role in achieving a major objective of higher education: stimulatingthe critical thinking of students. Research should investigate ways to promote teachers 'ability to transfer competencies in critical thinking tasks, to provide feedback to students' reasoning, and to their attitude toward teaching by using critical thinking (Janssen et al., 2019). It would also be necessary to train teachers on the matter of reproductive health of adolescents. The results of a research, in the previously mentioned field, showed that training in the field of reproductive health had a significant effect on teachers' knowledge (P <α (0,05) (Fajar, et al :, 2015). Considering the world wide context researchesare needed to understand how cultural diversity beliefs are shaped, experiential learning positively changing cultural diversity beliefs (Civitillo, Juang, Schachner, 2018). It is sad, but trainees are not prepared to face the challenges of cultural diversity, sustainability, although there is also a profile consistent with ecological education focused on sustainable actions (Pérez-Rodríguez, et. al:, 2017).

Klassen și Kim (2019) într-un articol analizau metodele utilizate pentru selectarea cadrelor didactice și pentru viitorii profesori care urmează să parcurgă programele inițiale de formare a profesorilor. Au fost analizate 32 de programe de studii care utilizează metode de selecție a profesorilor și care raportează eficacitatea programelor. Concluzia a fost de revizuire a programelor, propunând o agendă de cercetare care are potențialul de sporire a rezultatelor educaționale prin îmbunătățirea selecției viitorilor profesori (Klassen, Kim, 2019). Există semnale primite de la inspectorii școlari, directori, mentori și părinți în legătură cu dificultățile de integrare a aproape 35% dintre cadrele didactice din învățământul preșcolar și primar, profesori care se află la începutul activității lor profesionale. Se propunea ca posibile soluții: criterii clare de selecție a candidaților pentru programele de formare a cadrelor didactice din învățământul preșcolar și primar; coerența și gestionarea practicii didactice; impactul anumitor proiecte asupra setului de calificări al profesorului-debutant (Pălăşan, 2015).

Klassen and Kim (2019) have a reviewthat analyzed theused methods to select existing teachers and future teachers who are going to complete the initial teacher training programs. 32 study programs were using teacher selection methods and reporting the effectiveness of the programs. The conclusion was to review the programs, proposing a research agenda that has the potential to increase educational outcomes by improving the selection of future teachers (Klassen, Kim, 2019). There is feedback received from school inspectors, principals, mentors and parents regarding the difficulties of integrating almost 35% of the teachers in the preschool and primary education, teachers who are at the beginning of their professional activity. There were possible solutions proposals: clear criteria for selecting candidates for teacher training programs in pre-primary and primary education; coherence and management of teaching practice; the impact of certain projects on the set of qualifications of the beginner teacher (Pălăşan, 2015).

Teachers training has a significant impact on teachers' behaviors and the teaching abilities, as well as on students outcomes. According to the OECD Report (2010), the most effective way to increase the quality of education is to modify the curriculum and the initial recruitment method of future teachers and to develop new means for the continuous training of teachers, who are already active. For now, teacher training worldwide is part of higher education and, therefore, it is imperative to develop synergies between pre-university, university and research levels, depending on the evolution of teaching, learning and the evaluation strategies (Şoitu, 2014) . It is imposed, with necessity, to rethink the policies and practices from the initial training of the teachers, in order to obtain a future quality teaching.

There are researchers that are investigating the productivity of teachers, they have come to the conclusion that the productivity of beginner and middle school teachers increases with their professional experience (informal training in the workplace). Also, there is no evidence to show that the grades obtained in the bachelor's years or at the college entrance exam are related to teacher productivity later on (Harris, Sass, 2011).

3. Methodology

3.1. Research objectives

The research objective focused on: analyzing the satisfactiondegree of the graduates of the psycho-pedagogical module regarding the competences formed.

3.2 Research hypothesis

The main research hypothesis was:assuming that the students who go through the psycho-pedagogical module are satisfied with it, because they are trained, in addition to the specific competences, also an array of transversal competences, absolutely necessary in life.

3.3.1.1. Research method

The survey was based on a questionnaire, this is the main method used in the research. The questionnaire was built on two main dimensions:competences formed according to the university specialization and competences formed by the psycho-pedagogical module (Alpha Chronbach Coefficient: 0.864).

3.4 Research group

The research group comprised 221 students (from the 1st, second, 3rd year at the university- bachelor's degree), students who have completed or were currently completing the psycho-pedagogical module (N - 221). Of these, 82.8% (183 subjects) were female, the rest 17.2% (38 subjects) were male. If we take a look at the age distribution, we notice that most of the respondents belong to the age range 21-25 years (84.2% - 186 subjects), next to a small percentage, those aged between 31-40 years (7.7% - 17 subjects), then those aged between 26-30 years (6.8% - 15 subjects) and finally, those over 41 years old (1.4% - 3 subjects). Another criteria of characterization of the researched subjects was: the faculty that they are attending. Thus, most students (33.0% - 73 subjects) were from the Faculty of Psychology and Education Sciences and from the Faculty of Economic Sciences and Business Administration (25.8% - 57 subjects). Then follow the ones from the Faculty of Letters (16.7% - 37 subjects), also studentsnfrom the Faculty of Physical Education and Mountain Sports (10.4% - 23 subjects), those from Music and Law (5.4% - 12 subjects), Sociology and Communication (1.8% - 4 subjects) and the smallest percentage were from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (1.4% - 3 subjects). Of the investigated students, the vast majority are attending in the final university year (year 3) - 94.1% - 208 students.

Only 11 students (5.0%) are from year are attending the 2nd year and there were only 2 students (0.9%) are from the 1st year.

4. Results

We will begin the results analysis according to hypothesis: suppose that the students who go through the psycho-pedagogical module are satisfied with this because it trains them besides the specific competences, also a series of transversal competences, absolutely necessary in life. If we look at the degree of student satisfaction with the psycho-pedagogical module, we notice that they are satisfied, in a percentage of 74.2% (164 subjects), as follows: 29.4% - 65 subjects grade the activities from the psycho-pedagogical module to 8, 28.1% - 62 subjects graded the module to 9 and 16.7% - 37 subjects graded the module to10. A very small percentage, 1.4%, that is, 3 subjects graded to 6 the activities of the psycho-pedagogical module (lowest note awarded).

We questioned the degree students'satisfaction attending the psycho-pedagogical module correlated to an array of competences: didactic competences, transversal competences and competences necessary for the career orientation. As we expected the students satisfaction registered the highest score for the didactic skills: 78.27%, of which 65.61% respondents graded marks of:8, 9, 10 for the activities of the module for these competences; to these adding a percentage of 12.66% who answered that they are forming didactic skills, but they offer low marks: of 6, respectively, 7. The average value calculated for the didactic skills registers a score of 12.375 (with a standard deviation of 18.48) for the answers affirmative and a score of 10,045 (with a standard deviation of 11.78) for the negative answers.

There was a high correlation .905, at a significan threshold of 0.01. Assessment skills should not be lacking in a teacher. The students appreciate in a high percentage that these types of competences are formed: 71.49%, of which 60.18% respondents who give 8, 9, 10 marks for the activities of the module for these competences; to these, we are adding a percentage of 11.31% who responded that assessment skills are formed, but they offer low scores: of 6 respectively, 7. A high level correlation was measured: .905 ** (p - 0.01) .

A teacher plays the role of a manager for the student group, which is why the management skills were investigated. The students of the psycho-pedagogical module declared in a percentage of 52.85% that this type of competences were formed: 47.42% respondents graded marks of 8, 9, 10for the activities included in the module regarding these competences; to these adding a percentage of 5.43% who respond that management skills are formed, but they have offered low scores: of 6 respectively, 7 grade. The value of the average calculated for the managerial skills registers a score of 10.983 (with a standard deviation of 14.18) for affirmative answers and a score of 9.337 (with a standard deviation of 10.20) for negative answers. A high correlation was registered .905 **, at a significance threshold of 0.01 (see Tables 1 and 2).

A number of transversal competences were also investigated: psychosocial competences, those of relationship-communication and computer use. Thus, psychosocial competences were trained in 59.26% of the students. Of these, 54.29% gived grades of 8, 9, 10 for the activities included in the module for these competences; to them we are adding a percentage of 4.97% who respond that psychosocial competences are formed, but they have offered low scores: of 6 respectively, 7 marks. The average value calculated for psychosocial competencies recorded a score of 10.738 (with a standard deviation of 13.43) for the answers that were affirmative and a score of 9.484 (with a standard deviation of 11.23) for the negative answers. A high correlation was registerd .905 **, at a significance level of 0.01. The psycho-pedagogical module forms communication-relationship skills, as the students say, at 61.08% of them. Of these, 51.58% give grades of 8, 9, 10 for the activities of the module for these competences; to them, adding a percentage of 9.5% who respond that communication-relational skills are formed, but they offered low scores: of 6 respectively, 7 mark. The average value calculated for psychosocial competences registers a score of 10.738 (with a standard deviation of 13.43) for affirmative answers and a score of 9.484 (with a standard deviation of 11.23) for negative answers. The correlation was high, .906 ** (p-0.01) (see Tables 1 and 2). The research also followed the extent to which the psycho-pedagogical module trains students: computer use skills, pre-entrepreneurial skills or research skills. The results show that the psycho-pedagogical module forms these skills only to a small extent: 30.93% of students that say that computer skills have been formed, 37.10% say that research skills have been formed and a slightly higher percentage, 46.6% that pre-entrepreneurial competences have been formed (see Table 1).

Table no. 1 *The degree of student satisfaction regarding the competences formed*

The competences formed by the psycho-pedagogical module	*Notele acordate de studenți Notes given by students*										
	6		*7*		*8*		*9*		*10*		*Ns/Nr*
	da %	*nu %*	*da%*	*nu%*	*da%*	*nu%*	*da%*	*nu%*	*da%*	*nu%*	
Psychosocial competences	0.90	0.45	4.07	9.05	19.0	10.41	22.17	5.88	13.12	3.62	11.25
Relationship-communication skills	0.90	0.45	8.60	4.52	16.74	12.67	21.72	6.33	13.12	3.62	11.25
Computer skills	0.45	0.9	0.9	12.22	4.98	24.73	8.14	19.91	5.43	11.31	11.25
Entrepreneurial skills	0	1.36	4.52	8.60	9.95	19.46	14.4	13.57	6.33	10.41	11.25
Research skills	0	1.36	0	13.12	8.14	21.27	11.76	16.29	5.88	10.86	11.25
Managerial skills	0.45	0,90	4.98	8.14	15.75	13.57	19.0	9.05	12.67	4.07	11.25

Assessment skills	0.9	0.45	10.41	2.71	22.17	7.24	23.08	4.98	14.93	1.81	11.25
Teaching skills	0.9	0.45	11.76	1.36	27.15	2.26	23.98	4.07	14.48	2.26	11.25

Table no. 2 *The statistical averages registered accordong to the satisfaction degree regarding the competences students were trained for*

The competences formed by the psycho-pedagogical module	*Media – calculată*		*Abaterea standard*	
	Da	*Nu*	*Da*	*Nu*
Psychosocial competences	10.738	9.484	13.43	11.23
Computer skills	8.863	10.737	0.95	14.39
Entrepreneurial skills	8.641	11.401	0.95	16.22
Teaching skills	12.375	10.045	18.48	11.78
Managerial skills	10.983	9.337	14.18	10.20
Research Skills	8.912	10.888	0.73	15.03

An importantaspect admitted by the students was that of the activities concerning career orientation: knowing the personal potential, drafting the CV, respectively, preparing for the participation in a job interview. If we look at the degree of student satisfaction with the activities of knowing the personal potential, pointed out through the psycho-pedagogical module, we notice that they are satisfied, in a percentage of 65.57% (145 subjects), as follows: 44.34% - 98 subjects offered marks of 8 and 9, and 11.76% - 26 subjects give the maximum mark, 10. A very small percentage, 0.9%, that is 2 subjects have given grades of 6 to these activities (the lowest mark awarded).

The degree of student satisfaction regarding the activities of drafting of a curriculum presented through the psycho-pedagogical module, is one of medium-high level: 64.61% - 145 subjects. Of these: 55.56% - 125 subjects offered grades of 8 and 9 and 10, remaining a very small percentage, 0.45%, ie 1 subject giving a grade of 6, respectively 0.9% - 2 subjects giving grade 7, to those activities.

The students are also pleased with the preparatory activities for the presentation at an interview conducted through the psycho-pedagogical module, 69.76% - 152 subjects. These subjects are distributed as follows: 46.6% - 103 subjects offered grades of 8 and 9 and 12.22% - 29 subjects offered maximum score, 10. A very small percentage, 0.9%, ie 2 subjects graded 6 to these activities (see Table 3).

Table no. 3 *Degree of student satisfaction with career orientation activities*

Career orientation activities formed by the psycho-pedagogical module	*Notele acordate de studenți*										
	6		*7*		*8*		*9*		*10*		*Ns/Nr*
	da%	*nu%*	*da%*	*nu%*	*da%*	*nu%*	*da%*	*nu%*	*da%*	*nu%*	
Activities centered on knowing the personal potential	0.9	0.45	8.60	4.52	22.17	6.79	22.17	5.88	11.76	4.98	11.7
Activities of writing a CV	0.45	0.9	8.60	4.25	20.81	8.60	22.53	4.52	12.22	4.52	11.25
Training activities to help presentating oneselffor an interview	0.9	0.45	8.14	4.52	22.62	6.79	23.98	4.07	13.12	3.62	11.7

5. Conclusions

The psycho-pedagogical module has the task of forming a series of competences: teaching competences, transversal competences and competencies necessary for career orientation. The average value calculated for the didactic competencies records a score of 12.375 (with a standard deviation of 18.48) for the affirmative answers and a score of 10.045 (with a standard deviation of 11.78) for the negative answers. The students appreciate in a high percentage that the assessment competences are formed: 71.49%, of which 60.18% respondents who give marks of 8, 9, 10 for the module activities concerning these competences; to these, adding a percentage of 11.31% who respond that assessment skills are formed, but they offered low scores: of 6 respectively, 7 grade. The average calculated for managerial skills records a score of 10.983 (with a standard deviation of 14.18) for the affirmtive answers and a score of 9,337 (with a standard deviation of 10.20) for the negative answers. For the psychosocial competences, the average value registered a score of 10,738 (with a standard deviation of 13.43) for the affirmative answers and a score of 9,484 (with a standard deviation of 11.23) for the negative answers. The results show that the psycho-pedagogical module only forms to a small extent the computer skills, entrepreneurial skills or research skills (30.93% of students stated that computer skills were formed, 37.10% pleed for research skills formation and 46.6% agreed on entrepreneurialskills formation). A strong point acknowledgeby the students was that the activities included in the field of career orientation: knowing the personal potential, drafting the CV, as well as, getting prepared for the participation to a job interview. If we look at the degree of students satisfaction concerning the activities of knowing the personal potential realized through the psycho-pedagogical module, we notice that they are satisfied, in a percentage of 65.6% (145 subjects). The degree of satisfaction of the students regarding to the activities of drafting a curriculum through the psycho-pedagogical module, is one of medium-high level: 64.61% - 145 subjects.We notice that 69.76% of the sudents- 152 subjects are also pleased with the preparatory activities that aim presentatation to an interview conducted through the psycho-pedagogical module.

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TEACHING STRUCTURAL PHYSICAL CHEMISTRY USING ADEQUATE STRATEGIES

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Abstract: *Within this study we propose a few examples of student-centred exercises to be used when applying in teaching and learning structural physical chemistry. These exercises imply to compute the bond orders using molecular orbitals method for σ homonuclear and heteronuclear bonds and for π polycentric bonds from organic conjugated systems. The values obtained for the diatomic molecules bonds and their cations and anions, metals from primary and secondary groups and organic compounds containing nitrogen atoms are further correlated with some properties and applications of these substances. These exercisesalso prove that structural and energetic indices, calculated by molecular orbitals method support acid, oxidant and electrophilic character of investigateddiazonium cations, and these static indices of reactivity underpin the description of stability of these compounds on which depend their uses in coupling reactions.*

Keywords: *conjugated systems; electrical conductibility; electronegativity; energy bands; stability; structural indices.*

Introduction

Chemistry, a central science field, is widely recognized by the majority students as being difficult. Many students perform poor in chemistry and more than that, structural physical chemistryis often considered by chemistry students as being abstract, unintuitive and among the most difficult field (Tsaparlis, 2007; Mammino, 2009; Adesoji, 2017; Partanen, 2018 and the references therein). This perception is usually due to their lack of familiarity with mathematics and also to their difficulty in passing from the understanding of the macroscopic world to the abstract thinking and understanding of the concepts and models used in the field of structural physical chemistry(Tsaparlis, 2007; Tsaparlis, 2016; Mammino, 2009).Consequently, most of the students are faced with learning difficulties in structural physical chemistry. They use memorization without understanding, which may result in school abandon.It conducts to the perception of lack of ability in chemistry (what is also called low self-efficacy in chemistry) resulting in unfavourable consequences for departments trying to increase enrolment and have adverse consequences on the financial viability of those departments (Dalgety&Coll, 2006). An analysis concerning the interest in chemistry of 495 students in Sweden revealed the importance of the teacher and the structure of lessons and the relevance for everyday life (Broman & Simon, 2015).

These contexts illustrate the need of designing adequate teaching strategies enabling the students to understand models and to facilitate the use of the concepts and procedures that are specific for structural physical chemistry,respectively to correlate them with the physical properties and practical applications of various materials. It underlines the importance of applying active-learning methods in teaching structural physical chemistry such as to form the students' ability to use the knowledge and to transfer it for use in new contexts.

In one of our previous studies, we have illustrated the application of the problem-based strategy to demonstrate to chemistry students that some physical and chemical properties of the hydrocarbons, of the acyclic and cyclic ions and of the heterocycles with nitrogen atoms have been correlated with static reactivity parameters, described by molecular orbitals method (Dascalu et al., 2018). Within this paper, we illustrate the use of important concepts specific to the field of structural physical chemistry for both inorganic (non-metals and metals) and organic compounds, and correlate the results with the physicochemical properties and practical applications of investigated compounds.

Methodology

A linked polyatomic system may actually exist if its bond order (b.o.), as a structural index, has a positive value. This structural index is correlated with the length of that bond and consequently with some properties of inorganic and organic substances (Coulson&Longuet-Higgins, 1947). According to quantum mechanics, formation of chemical bond consists in redistribution of wave functions of external electrons of the atoms which interact in the field created by several nuclei (Chiriac V. et al, 2003). Consistent with the molecular orbitals method (MOM), the molecular orbitals wave function (ψ_{MO}) is obtained by a linear combination of atomic orbitals (LCAOs) wave functions (ψ_{AO}) (Hanson, 2005). This mathematical procedure implies an algebraic sum of ψ_{AO} wave functions of the reactive atoms, each of them amplified by a contribution coefficient at ψ_{MO} functions. If at linear combination only two atomic orbitals (AO) with function (ψ_A, ψ_B) and their contribution coefficient (c_A, c_B) participate, two bicentric (localized) molecular orbitals (MO) will form because only two independent linear combinations are possible. The sum ($c_A\psi_A + c_B\psi_B$) represents bonding MO and the difference ($c_A\psi_A - c_B\psi_B$) is antibonding MO. If more than two AO are combining, a number of polycentric delocalized MO is forming, equal with the number of AO combined. The bicentric localized MOs are energetically different, according to the linear combination which generated them. It is also true for the polycentric molecular orbitals. It must be mentioned that the external electrons distribution on MO is more stable than the one from isolated atoms.

If a bonding MO is occupied with the same number of electrons as the corresponding antibonding MO, their effect is annulled and the electrons come to be under the influence of one nucleus. Hence they become non-bonding electrons and the orbitals on which they are located, are monocentric non-bonding MOs.

In a homonuclear molecule (A≡B) the simple bond (σ) is a pure non-polar covalent one. The functions ψ_A and ψ_B of the two atoms participate equally (c_A=c_B=0.5) to form bonding (σ) and antibonding (σ*) MO, and the charge densities of A and B atoms are equals (Simon, 1973). For a heteronuclear molecule, assuming that B atom is more electronegative than A $(\bar{X}_B > \bar{X}_A)$, the contribution coefficients (c_A, c_B) are unequal, and σ bond is always polar and acquires a percent of ionic partial character (Simon, 1973). Therefore, at the value of 0.5 of the contribution coefficient, a supplementary contribution $\left(\frac{0.5\, i}{100}\right)$ for ψ_B in bonding MO and for ψ_A in antibonding MO is added, where*i* is the percent of the ionic character. In this situation, the electron cloud is not symmetrically distributed between the nuclei, but is concentrated close to the nucleus of the more electronegative atom. This gains a negative partial charge (-δ) and its partner will have a positive charge of the same value (+δ).

As stated by Pauling (Pauling, 1932), the electric moment (μ) of this dipole is calculated with the relation:

$$\mu = \delta \cdot e \cdot \bar{r} (1)$$

where *e* is electron charge and $\bar{r}$ is the length of the covalent bond, determined with Schomaker-Stevenson relation, from the values of the atomic radii (r_A, r_B) and the electronegativity coefficients of the bonding atoms ($\bar{X}_A$, $\bar{X}_B$)

$$\bar{r} = r_A + r_B - 0.09\,(\bar{X}_B - \bar{X}_A) \qquad (2)$$

Interatomic (simple) bond is unitary in the sense that ionic and non-polar covalent bonds are limit states of polar covalent bond. It must be also emphasized that in polyatomic molecules, same as diatomic ones, σ bonding MO and σ* antibonding MO are always bicentric localized.

Localized π covalent bond, characteristic to multiple bonds, is formed in the cases wherein after the formation of σ bonds, non-bonded electrons are still remaining at both atoms. In contrast to σ bonding MO without nodal plane in the internuclear space (monolobar cylindrical symmetry), π bonding MO has a nodal plane which separates the two lobs where wave function has opposing signs. In the case of π* antibonding MO, there are two nodal planes, one being perpendicular on internuclear axis (Chiriac et al, 2003).

Analysis of E_2 systems (A≡B) (E being an element from period 2, with Z≥7) indicates the following energy succession for the 8 MO (2·4 external AO):

$$\sigma_{2s} < \sigma^*_{2s} < \sigma_{2p_y} < \pi_{2p_x} \equiv \pi_{2p_z} < \pi^*_{2p_x} \equiv \pi^*_{2p_z} < \sigma^*_{2p_y} \qquad (3)$$

In the case of light elements from period 2, including C, for the E_2 molecules, the energy of molecular level is as follows:

$$\sigma_{2s} < \sigma^*_{2s} < \pi_{2p_x} \equiv \pi_{2p_z} < \sigma_{2p_y} < \pi^*_{2p_x} \equiv \pi^*_{2p_z} < \sigma^*_{2p_y} \qquad (4)$$

The difference between the relations (3) and (4) is due to interelectronic rejections of the clouds with the same symmetry.

In inorganic and organic compounds with polycentric π bonds, electrons from delocalized π orbitals are extending on all the atoms that form the molecule, thus increasing its stability (Marcu et al, 1984). In order to calculate bond order (p_{pq} or π_{pq}) between *p* and *q* atoms of such molecules, theHückel MOM theory can be used (Pullman& Pullman, 1963).

For the elements with low electronegativity ($X_E < 2.1$) MOM considers the metallic bond as a covalent one strongly delocalized in the field of all nuclei. Bonding and antibonding MO being degenerated, they are merged in energy bands (Chiriac et al, 2003).

In the case of metals from main groups, which have in the valence shell 4 AO (1 AO type *s* and 3 AO type *p*), for *n* atoms from *4n* AO, *4n* MO are formed: *2n* bonding MO and *2n* antibonding MO.

In the case of transition metals, favourable orbitals to form metallic bonds are those of *s* type from the valence shell and the *5(n-1)d* orbitals that have energy close by the one of *ns* orbitals. Thus from the six AO of a number of *n* atoms *3n* bonding MO and 3 antibonding MO are formed (Notario, 2016). The strength of metallic bond depends on the degree of occupancy of bonding MO, which constitute valence band (V.B) of energy band. The electron pairs from the valence shell of metal represent bonding band from V.B, the rest of molecular levels of energy band being a conduction band. A higher metal bond order conducts to an augmented hardness, but the thermal and electric conductivity of the metal are lower(Notario, 2016).

The bond order between two atoms of a molecule or molecular ion is equal with half of the difference between the number of electrons (*n*) from bonding MO and the number of electrons (*n**) from antibonding MO (Chiriac et al, 2003).

We consider in this study 13 molecular species (diatomic molecules, derivative molecular cations and anions) of the elements from the first two periods and correlate their electronic configurations and the calculated bond order withthe diamagnetic and paramagnetic character.The strength of the corresponding homonuclear bonds and the stability of those compounds can be explained and also correlated with the internuclear distances, from the literature data (Rioux, 2001). We have also considered 10 heteronuclear bonds (Chiriacet al, 2003) and calculated the electrical dipole moments (μ) and the contribution coefficients (c_A, c_B) of the wave functions (ψ_A, ψ_B) to the wave functions of σ bonding MO and σ* antibonding MO. Furthermore, bond orders (b.o.) of the 14 metals from 4th period were calculated by dividing the number of electron pairs of the atomswithin the metal to the number of bonding MO of the system.The obtained results are used to interprettheir physical and mechanical properties.

As organic compounds with polycentric π bonds, aniline diazonium salts, p-dimethylaminoaniline and 2-naphtylamine were considered in this study. The calculations being made only for theπ electrons systems of the molecules (π

approximation), bond orders (p_{qp} or π_{qp}) correspond to the requests of the HMO method.Consequently, to compute the secular determinant of these compounds, the computational technique has been considered, using Streitwieserparameters (Streitwieser, 1961).

Employing the Hückel matrices, the eigenvectors, the π levels of energy ($\varepsilon_i = \alpha + \lambda_i \cdot \beta$) of the molecular orbitals, the coefficients of the atomic orbitals' contributions to them, the bond orders (p_{qp}) (equation 5) and the free valence indices (F_q) (equation 6) have been calculated (Isac et al, 1981 a). In assessing the energy (ε_i) of molecular orbitals (hence of their electrons) the following forms of energy are considered (Simon, 1973):

- α energy, representing the energy of the electron placed on a *p* orbital of an isolated sp^2 carbon;
- β energy, representing the energy of the electron in the vicinity of two sp^2 hybridized carbons placed at the appropriate distance and orientation (that enable the overlap of their orbitals) to form a π bond;

The relation used to calculate the reactivity index between atoms p and q is:

$$p_{qp} = \sum_i n_i \cdot c_{iq} \cdot c_{ip} \qquad (5)$$

where c_{iq} and c_{ip} are contribution coefficients of ψ_{AO} at ψ_{MO}, the sum index *i* going through all atomic orbitals (Coulson, 1947). For stable molecules, MO are occupied with 2 electrons (n_i=2) till a certain energy and the superior MOs are free (n_i=0). For radicals, the highest occupied MO (HOMO) has one electron (n_i=1) (Simon, 1973).

One measure of the reaction capacity of some positions within a molecule in radical and ionic mechanisms is the free valence index of the atom *q* (F_q) (Coulson, 1947).The p_{qp}values obtained from the HMO computation usedto find this structural index using the relation

$$F_q = 1{,}732 - \sum_{p\ vecini} p_{qp} \qquad (6)$$

The concepts specific to the field of structural physical chemistry presented here are used to illustrate the correlation of some structural indexes calculated by MOM with the properties of some di- and polyatomic compounds with homonuclear and heteronuclear bonds. In this regard, we expect that the increase of the bond order will result in a shorter bond, a higher dissociation energy and a displacement toward smaller wavelengths of the corresponding bands in the vibration spectra (Simon, 1973)

Results and Discussion

The calculations of the sequences of molecular orbitals, of their occupation with electrons and of the corresponding bond orders for the homonuclear and derivative molecular ions are revealed in Table 1.

Table 1. The sequence of the molecular orbitals, their occupation with electrons and bond order for diatomic molecules, molecular cations and anions, of the elements from the first two periods

Molecular species	Electronic configuration of molecules	Bond order $\frac{n - n^*}{2}$
H_2	σ_{1s}^2	$\frac{1}{2}(2\text{-}0)=1$
H_2^+	σ_{1s}^1	$\frac{1}{2}(1\text{-}0)=\frac{1}{2}$
H_2^-	$\sigma_{1s}^2\sigma_{1s}^{*1}$	$\frac{1}{2}(2\text{-}1)=\frac{1}{2}$
He_2^+	$\sigma_{1s}^2\sigma_{1s}^{*1}$	$\frac{1}{2}(2\text{-}1)=\frac{1}{2}$
Li_2	σ_{2s}^2	$\frac{1}{2}(2\text{-}0)=1$
B_2	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\pi_{2p_x}^1\pi_{2p_z}^1$	$\frac{1}{2}(4\text{-}2)=1$
C_2	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\pi_{2p_x}^2\pi_{2p_z}^2$	$\frac{1}{2}(6\text{-}2)=2$
C_2^{2-}	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\pi_{2p_x}^2\pi_{2p_z}^2\sigma_{2p_y}^2$	$\frac{1}{2}(8\text{-}2)=3$
N_2	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\sigma_{2p_y}^2\pi_{2p_x}^2\pi_{2p_z}^2$	$\frac{1}{2}(8\text{-}2)=3$
O_2	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\sigma_{2p_y}^2\pi_{2p_x}^2\pi_{2p_z}^2\pi_{2p_x}^{*1}\pi_{2p_z}^{*1}$	$\frac{1}{2}(8\text{-}4)=2$
O_2^-	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\sigma_{2p_y}^2\pi_{2p_x}^2\pi_{2p_z}^2\pi_{2p_x}^{*2}\pi_{2p_z}^{*1}$	$\frac{1}{2}(8\text{-}5)=1.5$
O_2^{2-}	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\sigma_{2p_y}^2\pi_{2p_x}^2\pi_{2p_z}^2\pi_{2p_x}^{*2}\pi_{2p_z}^{*2}$	$\frac{1}{2}(8\text{-}6)=1$
F_2	$\sigma_{2s}^2\sigma_{2s}^{*2}\sigma_{2p_y}^2\pi_{2p_x}^2\pi_{2p_z}^2\pi_{2p_x}^{*2}\pi_{2p_z}^{*2}$	$\frac{1}{2}(8\text{-}6)=1$

Following correlations are resulting from data presented in Table 1:

- From the exemplified molecular configurations for σhomonuclearbonds result that the distribution of the electrons in MO follow the same rules as in the case of occupation of the electronic shell of the atom (the building up principle, the Pauli exclusion principle and the Hund's first rule);

- Electronic distributions of paramagnetic molecules ($H_2^+, H_2^-, He_2^+, B_2, O_2, O_2^-$) contain uncoupled electrons, while in diamagnetic compounds ($H_2, Li_2, C_2, C_2^-, N_2$, O_2^{2-} , F_2) only electron pairs exist;
- In gaseous phase, lithium exist as diatomic molecule (Li_2), in which atoms are bound by a bicentric σ bond, as in H_2 molecule;
- H_2^+şiH_2^- ions obtained by electrical discharges into rarefied hydrogen have the same bond order (1/2). In the cation molecule, density of bonding electronic cloud corresponds to one electron. In the anion molecule, the 3rd electron is in an antibonding orbital and,consequently, the binding effect of an electron from the molecular bonding orbital is cancelled;
- The internuclear distance (r_{AB})is $1.06 \cdot 10^{-10}$ m both in H_2^+ and in H_2^-.This distance is is higher compared to that observed in H_2 ($0.74 \cdot 10^{-10}$ m), thus the bonds of molecular ions are weaker.AnH_2^{2-} anion molecule can't exist (b.o.=0) because the bonding effect of the two electrons from bonding orbital is cancelled by the two electrons from antibonding orbital. As a result the molecule breaks into two anions hydride;
- The decrease of bonding order from O_2 (2), O_2^- (1.5), O_2^{2-} (1) is correlated with an increase of the length of the covalent bond O_2 ($1.21 \cdot 10^{-10}$ m), O_2^- ($1.26 \cdot 10^{-10}$ m), O_2^{2-} ($1.49 \cdot 10^{-10}$ m). An O_2^+cation molecule (b.o.=2.5 and $r_{AB}=1.12 \cdot 10^{-10}$ m), more stable than the O_2 molecule, was observed only in electrical discharges into rarefied oxygen and not in binary combinations (Marcu et al, 1984).

Applying the relations (1) and (2) to the 10σbicentricheteronuclear bonds under consideration lead to the results presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Dipole moments (μ) and contribution coefficients (c_A, c_B) of the atomic wave function to the molecular wave functions (bonding MO and antibonding MO) of 10 heteronuclear bonds

Bond A-B	$(\bar{X}_B-\bar{X}_A)$ (Pauling)	i (%)	$\bar{r}$ $(\cdot 10^{10}$ m)	μ $(\cdot 10^{30}$ C· m)	Bonding MO		Antibonding MO	
					c_A	c_B	c_A	c_B
(01) H-O	1.40	39	0.974	6.08	0.30	0.70	0.70	0.30
(02) H-N	0.90	19	1.04	3.16	0.41	0.59	0.59	0.41
(03) -C	0.40	4	1.14	0.72	0.48	0.52	0.52	0.48
(04) e-O	1.70	51	1.84	15.01	0.24	0.76	0.76	0.24
(05) e-S	0.70	12	2.22	4.26	0.44	0.56	0.56	0.44
(06) l-C	1.00	22	1.86	6.55	0.39	0.61	0.61	0.39

(07) -F	1.50	43	1.36	9.35	0.28	0.72	0.72	0.28
(08) s-F	3.30	96	2.67	41.01	0.02	0.98	0.98	0.02
(09) g-Br	0.90	19	2.59	7.87	0.40	0.60	0.60	0.40
(10) g-I	0.60	9	2.80	4.03	0.45	0.55	0.55	0.45

Quantum-mechanics calculationspresented in the Table 2 lead to the following remarks:

- Bonds (04) and (08) are preponderant ionic ($\Delta\overline{X} \geq 1.7$), have permanent high dipole moments and strong electric polarization effects. The biggest difference of the electronegativity coefficients ($\Delta\overline{X} = 3.3$) is revealed by theCsF complex, but also in this case 4% of the electronic cloud is common.
- Iron bond in oxide (04) has a much more pronounced ionic character than the iron bond in sulfide (05), because $\overline{X}_O > \overline{X}_S$;
- The carbon-aluminum (06) and carbon-fluoride bonds (07) are preponderant covalent, but based on the data revealed in Table 2 relations regarding their ionicity can be established: i(C-F) ≅ 2i (C-Al); μ(C-F) ≅ 1.40 μ(C-Al);
- Regarding thebonds made by the C, N and O with hydrogen (bonds (03), (02) and (01)) their ionic character increases in correlation with the increase of$\overline{X}_B$, decrease of r_B and with the polarizability of the second atom in the molecule. Due to the weak ionic character, the bond (03) can be considered as non-polar covalent (standard in establishing + I and – I inductive effects of atoms and groups of atoms);
- The higher polarizability of iodine compared with the one of bromine results in an increase of the weight of the covalent bond from bond (09) to bond (10), both being responsible for the decrease of the solubility in water of the compounds containing them;
- The relationship between the contribution coefficients (c_A, c_B) of AO (calculated according to$i$) in MO formation shows that: AO of the more electronegative atom participates to a greater extent in the formation of the bonding MO, and AO of the less electronegative atom contributes more in formation of antibonding MO.
- The essential characteristics of the σ bonds are rigidity (the interatomic distances remain constants when the aggregation state modifies) and spatial orientation around the nuclei.

The examples with the 4th period metals (emphasized in Table 3), whose research dates back to Antiquity (Cu, Fe, Zn), 18th century (Ti, Cr, Mn, Co, Ni) and 19th century (K, Ca, Ga, Ge, V, Sc), are considered for applying the method of bonding orders in explaining some of their properties (Chiriac et al, 2001). For some of them, the graphical (symbolic) configuration of their metallic structure is included (Figure 1).

Table 3. The electronegativity of the metals of the 4th period of the Periodic Table of Mendeleev, computed using thescale established by Pauling in 1932

Group I		Group II		Group III		Group IV		Group V	Group VI	Group VII	Group VIII
A	B	A	B	A	B	A	B	B	B	B	B
K 0.8	Cu 1.9	Ca 1.0	Zn 1.6	Ga 1.6	Sc 1.3	Ge 1.8	Ti 1.5	V 1.6	Cr 1.6	Mn 1.5	Fe Co Ni 1.8 1.8 1.8

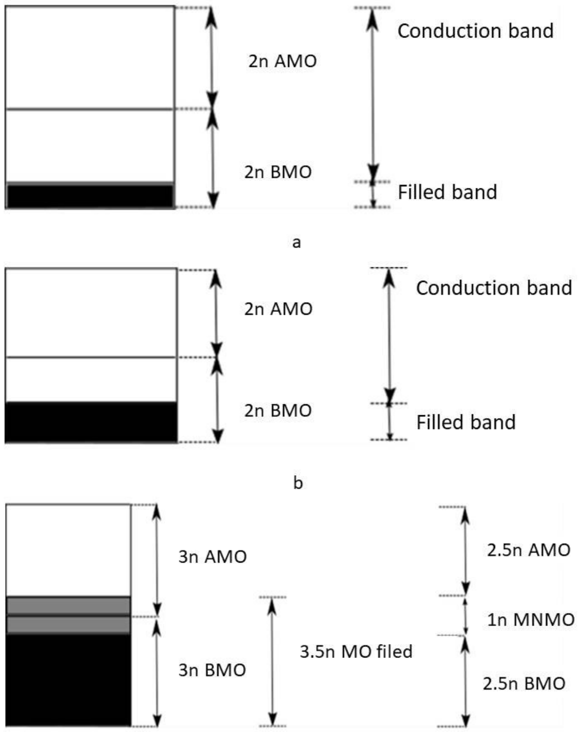


Figure1. The distribution of electrons in the energy band of potassium (a), calcium (b), manganese (c): AMO – antibonding molecular orbital, BMO – bonding molecular orbital, MNMO – monocentric nonbonding molecular orbital.

The hierarchy upon the bond orders of the four metals from the main groups is as follows (A):

$$K\left(\frac{\frac{n}{2}}{2n}\right) < Ca\left(\frac{n}{2n}\right) < Ga\left(\frac{\frac{3n}{2}}{2n}\right) < Ge\left(\frac{2n}{2n}\right) \quad (7)$$

Taking into account equation (7), from K toward Ge, it is noted:

•the bonds between atoms become stronger;
•atomic radii (in Å) decrease in the order
K (1.96) > Ca (1.74) > Ga (1.26) > Ge (1.22) (8)
•electrical and thermal conductivities decrease;
•densities, hardness, melting and boiling temperatures increase.

The bands structures of the metals belonging to the second group (B) of the fourth period can also be correlated with the literature data. Such correlations are illustrated in Table 4.

Table 4. Population with electrons in the fundamental state of the transition metals of the fourth period

Element	Sc	Ti	V	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn
Electrons 3d	d^1	d^2	d^3	d^5	d^5	d^6	d^7	d^8	D^{10}	d^{10}
Total number of electrons (3d+4s) for an atom	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Total number of electron pairs for n atoms	$\frac{3n}{2}$	2n	$\frac{5n}{2}$	3n	$\frac{7n}{2}$	4n	$\frac{9n}{2}$	5n	$\frac{11n}{2}$	6n
Bond order	$\frac{\frac{3n}{2}}{3n}=$	$\frac{2n}{3n}=$	$\frac{\frac{5n}{2}}{3n}=$	$\frac{3n}{3n}=1$	$\frac{\frac{5n}{2}}{3n}=$	$\frac{2n}{3n}=$	$\frac{\frac{3n}{2}}{3n}=\frac{1}{2}$	$\frac{n}{3n}=\frac{1}{3}$	$\frac{\frac{n}{2}}{3n}=\frac{1}{6}$	$\frac{n}{2n}=$
Number of electron pairs localized in non-bonding monocentric MO	-	-	-	-	n	2n	3n	4n	5n	5n
Number of electron pairs available for delocalization	$\frac{3n}{2}$	2n	$\frac{5n}{2}$	3n	$\frac{5n}{2}$	2n	$\frac{3n}{2}$	n	$\frac{n}{2}$	n

Taking into account the date presented in Table 4, the following points can be made:
•As the number of valence electrons of the metal increases, the electrons occupy a larger region of V.B;
•The binding order increases from the elements in the group III B (b.o.= 0.5) to those of group VI B, where it reaches the unit value;
•From the element of group VII B, the electrons also occupy the molecular antibonding orbitals of the energetic band. In this way, monocentric nonbinding molecular orbitals occur and are localized at the atomic cores placed in the nodes of the network. It is considered that the non-bonding electrons occupy the *np*vacant level, so that the energetic bandwidth does not change as long as the orbitals*d* arein the process of being occupied;

•The binding order between the manganese atoms is lower than that between the chromium atoms and decreases further with increasing the order number of element from the 3d series;
•For the elements belonging to groups I B and II B, the complete occupation of the orbital *3d* determines their stabilization. They become non-binding monocentric orbitals, located at the atomic cores. The energy band changes its structure, its "width" becomes *4n*, just as for the metals from the *block s*.
•The metals in the series: Sc, Co, Zn; Ti, Fe; V, Mn have the same binding orders.

In support of exemplifying by correlation some properties, we present (Macarovici, 1972):
•For vanadium and manganese:
- atomic radii V (1.34 Å), Mn (1.26 Å);
- densities V (6.1 g cm^{-3}), Mn (7.43 g cm^{-3});
- Brinell hardness V (264 kg mm^{-2}), Mn (210 kg mm^{-2});
- melting points V (1715 °C), Mn (1247 °C).
•For copper and iron to 0°C:
- specific electrical resistance ($\rho \cdot 10^6$ Ω) – Cu (1.692), Fe (8.8);
- thermal conductivity ($cal.cm^{-1}$ s^{-1} $grad^{-1}$) – Cu (0.94), Fe (0.21).

For the metals, in MOM theory, the energy bands appear as a consequence of interactions of a very large number of particles placed in the nodes of crystalline network. The band width and the bond order are higher as the interaction between the particles is stronger. If this interaction is rather weak, there are not conduction bands.

By applying the algorithm to establish the polycentric molecule structure, for the three diazonium salts considered within this study, the data from Table 5 were obtained.

Table 5. The structures in conformity with MOM for the benzendiazonium cation (I), the p-dimethylaminobenzenediazoniummonocation (II) and the 2-naphthalene diazonium cation (III)

Compound	AO	MO	Number of electron pairs	antibonding MO		bonding MO		nonbonding monocentric MO
				σ*	π*	σ	π	
$[C_6H_5—N_2]^+$ (I)	37	37	19	13	5	13	5	1
$[(H_3C)_2N—C_6H_5—N_2]^+$ (II)	54	54	28	21	5	21	5	2
$[C_{10}H_7—N_2]^+$ (III)	55	55	28	20	7	20	7	1

The values obtained from the calculation for the binding orders (Figure 2) are correlated with the structure of these cations in terms of the simple, double and triple bond between atoms. Also, researches concerning their thermal and photochemical stability motivate their use in coupling reactions.

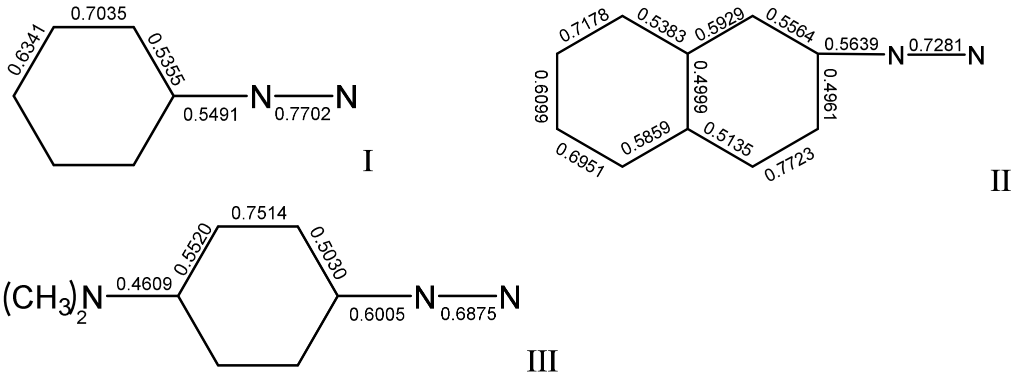
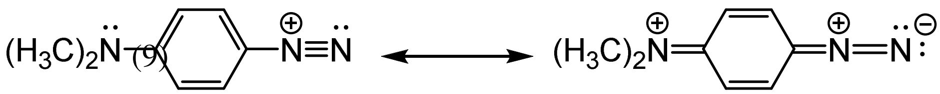


Figure 2. The bonding orders p_{qp} (the number near valences in the pictures) for the two mononuclear diazonium cations (I, II) and the polynuclear (III) cation.

Experimentally, it is found that, at room temperature, the thermal stability of compound II is relatively high (Isac et al, 1981 b). It is assumed that this stabilization is due to the resonance, which determines the increase of the order of the C-N bond (Barraclough, 1972).



Under these conditions, the photochemical effects on this diazonium salt can be easily distinguished, with applicability in the process of photocopying (diazotism). (Lee, 1961) The photo-reactivity of the compound II is due to its more extended conjugate system that displaces the maximum of absorption toward red, i.e. toward visible domain.

For compounds I and III, experimental literature data (Simon, 1967)correlated with the REPE index (Matito, 2007), *i.e.* the resonance energy (β) relative to the n_π delocalized electrons, sets the two diazonium salts upon stability in the relationship:

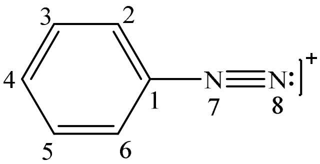
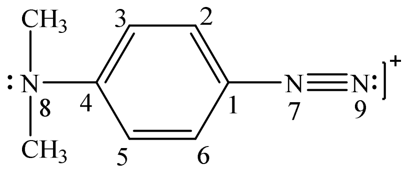
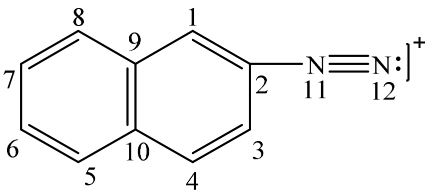
benzendiazonium cation (0.6392)>2-naphthylindiazonium cation (0.4280) (10)

Particularization on the construction of the Woodward Hoffmann molecular correlation diagram for the decomposition of compound I has used the HMO method of molecular orbitals (Isac et al, 1985). Correlations with literature data may be as follows:

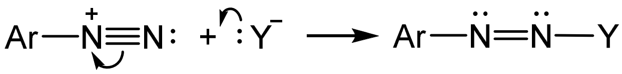
•The reaction allowed thermally and photochemically, with the purely thermodynamic activation energy (E_a=27.1 kcal mol^{-1}) without a barrier itself is explained by the higher stability of the diazonium cation by comparison to thatof the decomposition products. (De Tar, 1956)
•The pre-exponential coefficient ($A=5.10^{15}$ s^{-1}) is increased because, when the C-N bond is broken, in the activated complex, the interaction of electrons of the diazonium group, especially of π electrons, with those of the remaining molecule will be weakened or even cancelled. (Simon&Bădilescu, 1967)

Using the values of the binding orders (Figure 2), we have computed the free valence indices (equation 6) of the atoms in the three investigated diazonium salts and resulting data are revealed in Table 6. Data in Table 6 reveal that the valence indices follow $F_N > F_C$ relationship, being in good agreement with the known electronegativity tendency (Putz, 2006). These diazonium cations are not strong electrophilic reactants due to the delocalization of their positive charges. The azo coupling of these compounds may occur only with strong nucleophiles ($:Y^-$) (Rys, 1996).

Table 6. The valence indices (Fq), calculated using the HMO method for the atoms of the conjugated systems I, II, III, with n_π delocalized electrons.

Molecule	n_π	F_q	
 (I)	8	$F_1 = 0.1119$ $F_2 = F_6 = 0.4930$ $F_3 = F_5 = 0.3944$	$F_4 = 0.4638$ $F_7 = 0.4127$ $F_8 = 0.9618$
 (II)	10	$F_1 = 0.1255$ $F_2 = F_6 = 0.4776$ $F_3 = F_5 = 0.4286$ $F_4 = 0.1671$	$F_7 = 0.4640$ $F_8 = 1.2711$ $F_9 = 1.0645$
 (III)	12	$F_1 = 0.5827$ $F_2 = 0.1156$ $F_3 = 0.4636$ $F_4 = 0.4452$ $F_5 = 0.4510$ $F_6 = 0.4270$	$F_7 = 0.4043$ $F_8 = 0.4759$ $F_9 = 0.1009$ $F_{10} = 0.1327$ $F_{11} = 0.4400$ $F_{12} = 1.0039$

As Lewis acids, cations I, II, III may participate in acid-base organic chemical reactions, demonstrating the ability to form covalent bonds between the marginal nitrogen (with high F_N) and nucleophilic agents (bases) (Isac et al, 2017). The generalization given by the chemical equation



(11)

illustrates their character of oxidizing agents. In this respect, by referring to the energy index of the lowest MO free (ε_{LUMO}), it indicates the facility with which the molecule is reduced (Simon, 1973).

Based on the results obtained by the HMO method, the arrangement of the three cations after ε_{LUMO} is the following

I ($\alpha + 0.1786\beta$) < III ($\alpha + 0.1685\beta$) < II ($\alpha + 0.1111\beta$) (12)

As a consequence of the correlation between the chemical structures and practical applications, we give as example the use of cation I as the oxidizing agent for sodium bisulphite in the synthesis of arylhydrazine (Avram, 1995).

Conclusions

The information presented within this paper illustrates the role of science education theories and tools for the teaching and active learning of structural physical chemistry. We have selected a few examplesof student-centred exercises that may be used to emphasize the usefulness of the concepts specific to the field of structural physical chemistry for correlating the structural indices calculated by applying the MOM with the physicochemical properties and practical applications of 37 diatomic with homonuclear and heteronuclear bonds (both non-metals and metals) and 3 polyatomic compounds. The chosen examples illustrate the applicability of the problem solving method in teaching and learning structural physical chemistry. The teaching and learning task are to be successively solved (the degree of difficulty increases from one meeting to the other) by small groups of about 3–4 people with aid from teacher within 4 weeks and solutions are argued at the end of the meeting by every group. The discussions between the groups of students and the given arguments, give to the teacher the opportunity to notice the aspects of the student reasoning and to improve feedback quality. We expect an increase in students' motivation and understanding of the concepts of structural physical chemistry as a result of applying this strategy.

Acknowledgements: Through this study, we want to pay tribute to our dear mentors, Prof. Dr. Acad. Zeno Simon, Prof. Dr. Adrian Chiriac and Prof. Dr. Mircea Mracec and to acknowledge their contribution to the development of the structural physical chemistry field by their teaching courses in the West University of Timisoara and by their internationally recognized research work.

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THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER IN THE ORGANIZATION OF LEISURE TIME IN BOARDING SCHOOL

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Abstract: *Although the phenomenon of leisure time is increasingly being explored today, domestic literature is deficient in the field of educational practice in boarding schools, especially when it comes to leisure time and leisure activities. This article presents the role of the teacher in organizing leisure time in boarding schools, in order to view leisure time as an important factor in the development of a psychophysically healthy personality. The pedagogical aspect of leisure time was considered theoretically, current content that is represented in the leisure time of young people and emphasis is placed on outdoor activities as a valid way to spend leisure time. Students spend most of their time in boarding school and that is why the role of the teacher in creation, organization and realization of leisure time is important, in order to avoid negative influences and leave young people with negative behaviors and phenomena.*

Keywords: *teacher; boarding school; leisure time.*

Introduction

In addition to preschools, primary and secondary schools, high school boarding schools are important educational institutions, which allows students to continue their education after primary education.

A boarding school teacher is a competent and professional person who helps and supports students as they grow up, advises, finds ways and solutions in guiding his students to the end of their education (Stilin, 2005). The primary task of boarding school teacher is to guide and directs students in a pedagogical way, give them guidance and support their healthy psychophysical development.

In order to make the stay of students inboarding schools interesting and well spent, it is necessary to pay considerable attention to leisure activities and leisure time. Leisure time in boarding schools is mostly based on sections that are realized during the school year. Boarding schools are different from each other, both in terms of capacity, material and technical equipment, professional staff, and the representation and variety of sections. Certainly, the most represented sections inboarding schools includes the aspect of sports, recreational and cultural-artistic activities. The ways of realization of the sections are extremely important in the educational work and use of leisure time. Students will recognize if the teacher is completing the section with quality, whether he enjoys working with section members, does he make suggestions to students, praise or realizes the section only to fill that time in boarding school. Leisure time inboarding school should not be directed exclusively to sections, rather, it needs to be diverse and filled with other activities.

Boarding school houses students of different socio-economic status, culture, upbringing, interest and other individual characteristics. By original realization of leisure activities, teacher will interest the students to spend their leisure time inboarding school and not in another place. In this way, the possibility of passive and unproductive leisure time and the development of negative and delinquent behavior in young people is reduced. By bringing students together around interesting, innovative and close-knit activities, we contribute to their versatile development. With quality organized leisure time we positively influence, direct and prepare young people for their later use of leisure time.

In this article an attempt was made to present the relevant role of the teacher in organizing leisure time inboarding school, with the aim to view leisure time as an important factor in the development of a psychophysically healthy personality.

Pedagogical aspect of leisure time

Today, more and more attention and dedication is directed towards pedagogical study and clarification of the importance of leisure time.Leisure time is "A time of active rest, pleasure, positive development, socialization, humanization and creative confirmation of personality" (Previšić, 2000: 406). Leisure time is a space that a person organizes, realizes, creates in accordance with his wishes and interests in order to rest, have fun, enjoy and develop a healthy personality.

Students spend significantly more time inboarding school than at school, and for this reason it is of particular importance that students' leisure time inboarding school is well-designed and well organized.

Leisure time that has no educational content is reduced to idle, boredom and even negative phenomena. In this sense, the essence of the pedagogical action of education through leisure time lies at the heart (Budimir-Ninković, Popov, 2016). An old saying is well known "Boredom is the devil's playground", which vividly describes boredom but also warns of its harmful effects. Boredom is a space that young people can fill with various negative and harmful activities. "Much of asocial behavior is known to stem from boredom, from an individual's inability to creatively fulfill his or her leisure time." (Gočević, 2013: 90). Therefore, students inboarding school should be occupied with healthy activities and allow them to relax, have fun and gain knowledge about the proper use of leisure time.

Through leisure activities, students can express and satisfy their sports, technical, cultural, artistic, and scientific aspirations, because it is an expanded field for different initiatives and the ability to work independently (Krulj, Kačapor, Kulić, 2001). Leisure activities contribute to developing a sense of creativity, building a proper attitude towards work and educating a child from a young age to love, respect and appreciate work (Grandić, Letić, 2008). Free activities encourage the development of friendship, contribute to the promotion of cooperativeness, empathy, active listening, interaction and communication.

Actual contents in the leisure time of young people in pedagogical literature

There are numerous theoretical and empirical studies dealing with the leisure time of children and young people. Certainly, among the mentioned works are very rare works whose subject of research is leisure time and leisure activities in boarding school.

In his monograph Home Pedagogy, author DraganJešić devoted a significant part to the leisure time in the boarding school. The aforementioned author points out that, even though the use of leisure time is a matter for each individual, that does not mean that leisure should flow spontaneously and disorganized (Ješić, 2008).

In order to have a comprehensive view of the problem of youth leisure time, we will present the results of some relevant surveys, through which we will identify the most dominant and present youth leisure activities.

Exact results of an empirical research(Stepanović, 2011) called "Youth and Fun: Is There Any Place for Concern?" Involving 2426 high school students shows that young people spend most of their leisure time hanging out, watching TV, and using a mobile phone. Similar results were obtained by authors from Poland, who state that more than 42% of children under 14 spend 3 hours daily on a computer or watching television (Drygas, Kwaśniewska, Kaleta, Ruszkowska-Majzel, 2008). So, young people usually use their leisure time to have fun and relax.

The starting point of the research of the author Mijatović, in which 100 participants of the fourth grade of secondary school participated, was: How do young people spend their leisure time and what are the offers for spending it? Dominant leisure activities are watching television, going to social networks and relaxing. The least attended activities are playing sports, hanging out with friends and volunteering (Mijatović, 2014).

152 respondents participated in the survey titled 'Ways of Leisure Time for High School Students in KosovskaMitrovica'. The analyzed results of the mentioned research show that the majority of high school students spend their leisure time with mass media, ie with electronic media, watching television and listening to music. When asked which high school students spend their leisure time with, the most commonly answered is with society. A third of the high school students surveyed reported that they spend their leisure time with their family. Girls were more likely than boys to spend their leisure time with family. Socializing with a boyfriend or girlfriend and spending leisure time alone are the least represented activities (Cvetković, Radović, 2012).

The article entitled “Youth Leisure Time Activities” highlights the importance of leisure time and shows how young people most often spend their leisure time. The sample of this research included 392 students. The results show that the most common leisure activities for young people are as follows:

entertaining with music, browsing the internet, engaging in a computer and watching television for a long time (Gočević, 2013).

Although the number of interviewed respondents varies among the aforementioned articles, we can observe that the results of the above empirical studies are very similar. Watching television, listening to music, vacationing, having fun on the internet and at a computer are the activities that are present in all the aforementioned research. Young people mostly spend their leisure time through fun, relaxation and rest. The presented research results lead us to conclude that it is necessary for young people to provide quality and creative leisure time space.

Boarding school is a suitable institution that can guide and educate young people through a variety of leisure activities. It is significant that boarding school teachers focus on the problem of leisure time for young people, because it is they who work with this population. Therefore, it is necessary to enrich the pedagogical literature with relevant articles dedicated to this field - leisure time inboarding schools, as the students' boarding schools are a unique link in the system of education.

Teacher as an organizer of leisure activities in boarding school

When it comes to organizing leisure time inboarding school, the role of a teacher is not simple at all. The teacher is confronted with different profiles of students, their desires, opportunities and interests. The task of the teacher is to recognize the strengths of the students and to nurture, direct and perfect them. Leisure time is a valid opportunity to nurture and enhance students' strengths through numerous leisure time activities.

As a small number of teaching staff are familiar with the issues of leisure time, the following measures must be taken: expand the programs of the pedagogical group of subjects in the teacher and pedagogical faculties with the material of pedagogical problems of leisure time; during their studies, to introduce students to the practical management of leisure activities; organize more frequent vocational training for all pedagogical staff involved in the organization of leisure time; to acquaint children and young people with the benefits of proper use of leisure time (Tomić, Hasanović, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary to train teachers to organize and create leisure activities during their studies.

Leisure time is like a music orchestra. If he is led and directed by a good conductor, he plays well and vice versa. If there is no conductor, then the orchestra is uncoordinated, disorganized and non-symphonic (Plenković, 1997).

In order to organize the leisure time in boarding school successfully and quality, it is necessary that teacher take into account the following recommendations:

Involve your students in your leisure time organization. The teacher, together with the students, can make daily, weekly or monthly plans for leisure activities. In this way, students will feel like they are relevant factors, because together with the educator they organize one segment of life in boarding school -

leisure time. Involvement of students in organizing leisure time promotes the exchange of ideas, opinions and attitudes on the teacher-student relationship.

Respect the individual characteristics of the student. The goal of leisure activities is to encourage students to create, acquire and adopts knowledge and skills according to their individual interests and abilities (Šiljković, Rajić, Bertić, 2007). The activities the teacher plans to implement must be coordinated and adapted to the individual abilities of the student. By respecting individual characteristics, teachers enable students to cultivate and nurture their personal identities and their strengths.

Allow each student to experience success. Knowing their students, the teacher will know what their interests are, their strengths, and what they are exceptional at. In this way, the teacher will be able to reward, praise and highlight each student, as they will recognize the area in which they are successful.

Use a method of encouragement in working with students. The educator through leisure activities can apply various means of encouragement, such as approval, reward, verbal praise.Analyzed research results indicate that teachers rarely use praise when working with students (Baranović, 2006). Student encouragement involves affirmative statements and activities by which the teacher expresses an understanding and acceptance of the students' behavior and is defined by the following indicators: respect for the quality of interaction and communication between educators and students, respect for individual differences, respect for the feelings and opinions of students, as well as helping the student and paying attention to the student (Lalić-Vučetić, 2007). In this way, we encourage students to have positive attitudes and emotions towards a particular activity.

Be flexible. The teacher should not be rigidly focused on only one activity and one environment when implementing leisure activities. It is important to be flexible in creating, organizing and implementing leisure activities.

Be original and creative. The creative educator is a central factor in the creation of creative educational situations that will enable creative learning, and the mutual creative behavior of educators and students, e.g their interaction, will influence development (Balažević, 2010). Leisure time is a space whose capacity teachers can use originally, creatively and innovatively to develop creative potential in students.

Provide a cozy atmosphere. It is well known that we choose to be part of those groups where we feel accepted and where our personality is respected, and to avoid those groups where we feel bad and unaccepted (Rot, 2003). If there is a rigidity of the teacher in realization of sections or other leisure activities, student misunderstanding and disrespect, lack of empathy, certainly contributes to the student's desire not to be part of that group. Every student should feel important, accepted, respected and comfortable in the group during the exercise.

"Young people represent a kind of "mirror"in which the outlines of all relevant institutions involved in shaping their identities can be recognized. Through the processes of identification, internalisation and assimilation, young people adopt basic attitudes and shape their behavior (Pehlić, 2014: 119). Therefore, the role of teachers in boarding school is to have a positive effect on shaping the personal identity of students, and leisure activities in this can be of great educational importance.

Natural activities – a way to release your leisure time in boarding school

In order to ensure that leisure time in boarding school is not based exclusively on sections, organizing outdoor activities can be one of the valid ways of spending quality free time.

Many prominent pedagogues and psychologists have written about the importance of nature and its great influence on the healthy development of personality,such as Jan Amos Komensky, J. Friedrich Pestalozzi, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and others. In his works, "The Polish Classroom - A Hygiene and Pedagogical Institution" and "Physical Education", Adžić emphasizes the great importance of staying children and young people in the natural environment.

"Contemporary children / students tend to miss the whole view of many things in nature and society and are therefore deprived of their original understanding of things." (Kiš-Novak, 2006: 142). For this reason, teachers have a unique opportunity to enable students to reside in nature and emphasize its positive importance on the growth and development of a young personality.

Whenever weather permits, the opportunity for leisure activities in nature should be used. A teacher can evaluate whether it will be a park, a backyard or a nature walk. Whether a teacher opts for cultural, artistic or sports-recreational activities in the nature, he or she must not lose sight of the fact that they are leisure activities and should not be reduced to learning and working. These activities should, both in content and organization, encourage creativity and contribute to the development of independence in planning and cultural leisure activities (Nikolić, 2005).

It is necessary for the teacher to prepare in detail the activity that he or she plans to carry out with the students so that the students can relax, socialize, have fun and develop positively. The realization of activities in nature has a motivating effect on the work of students, because it takes place in a healthy and pleasant environment, surrounded by greenery and ornamental plants (Milanović, 2018). So, leisure time in boarding school can be organized in different ways. It is imperative that teachers more thoroughly devote themselves to leisure time in boarding school and make it meaningful, creative and diverse.

Nature activities have a pedagogical, psychological, social, therapeutic, health, hygienic importance and it is relevant that their boarding school teachers pay attention to them and influence them to develop healthy behaviors in students.

Conclusion

The article deals with the role of teachers in organizing and creating leisure time inboarding schools. The role of the teacher is very important in the organization and realization of leisure time and leisure activities inboarding school.

In order to be able to select the right activities and successfully create leisure time inboarding school, the teacher should involve the students in the organization of leisure time, respect the individual characteristics of the student, enable each student to succeed, uses a method of encouragement, to be flexible, creative, original and to provide a comfortable atmosphere for the realization of leisure activities.

The teacher, through his work and in part, should be a model for students to actively spend their leisure time, emphasizing the importance of leisure time for the development of a happy, successful and satisfied personality. Based on a variety of empirical research that has focused on the content and ways of spending young people's leisure time, we concluded that passive activities were most present and that the aspect of leisure time of young people requires more careful dedication by responsible social institutions.

Young people who are housed in boarding school are in a sensitive period - adolescence, which brings with it a series of changes, challenges and obstacles. If leisure time is not content and quality, students can explore and find fun in activities that are bad, dangerous and negatively targeted at their personal development.

In order to make leisure time better, nature activities are one of the valid ways to spend your free time. In nature, the teacher encourages the development of all components of the upbringing. A healthy and pleasant environment, in the open air, contributes to rest, relaxation and, above all, healthy psychophysical development of a young person.

The leisure time in the boarding school should be taken seriously by the educators and through pedagogical activities raise the students' awareness of the serious role of leisure time on their positive growth and development.

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CONFLICT MEDIATION BETWEEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CHILDREN

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Abstract*:* *Conflicts between children refer to misunderstandings or hostilities between children of the same age. These often are occasional, unplanned and do not involve extreme violence. However, peaceful conflict resolution skills must be learned at an early age in order to prevent degenerate into violent acts at a later age. The aim of this study was to analyze the conflicts that appear in the elementary school classes. These were then grouped according to their intensity. One group of children was then exposed to conflict resolution activities. Our results demonstrate the validity of the working hypothesis and support the idea of introducing specialized hours in the school curricula addressing positive conflict management skills.*

Key words: *elementary school; children; conflicts; conflict resolution; mediation.*

Theoretical framework

Previous studies show there is increasing risk of violence and conflict in school settings among children (Hojbotă et al., 2014). There are two general positions regarding emergence of school conflicts: (1) one arguing that the school is a micro-system of the society and therefore, violence in society also translates into school settings (Johnson and Johnson, 1979); (2) one arguing that schools are safe places and, therefore, there is little violence happening in schools (Johansson and Emilson, 2016). One way to approach this difference of opinions relies in understanding the nature of the conflicts emerging in schools and the different theoretical perspectives on violence between children.

First, the conflict must be delimited from other concepts with similar connotations such as “competition”, “aggression”, “influence” or “domination”. *Competition* involves fighting against some people to reach a goal that only one or a few can achieve. *Aggression* refers to behaviors meant to hurt other people. While competition and aggression are accompanied by conflict, not every type of conflict necessarily reflects competition or aggression (Johnson and Johnson, 2009). *The influence* is related to the orientation of others in the direction desired by the person, and the *domination* refers to an influence in one direction (for example, from the teacher to the student or from a “good” student to a “bad” student). When the conflict is confused with these related concepts, it becomes linked to extreme behaviors that are present only in a small fraction of the current disputes that arise in schools (McKibben, 2017).

Researchers in the field of conflict resolution have tried to contribute theoretically and practically to the definition of this concept, concluding that the concept is multi-faceted. Considered pioneers in the field, Deutsch, Coleman and Marcus (2006) argue that conflict can both have a constructive and destructive potential. Those conflicts that urge learning, personal and social development, or which lead to opportunities for change are defined in a constructive approach and such conflicts should not be avoided. Many other authors adhere to this idea: Abigail and Cahn (2011); Johnson and Johnson (2009); Johansson and Emilson (2011).

Knowing more about how teachers understand emerging conflicts can be of major educational importance, and it contributes to the development of teachers' professional language regarding these little discussed conflicts. In addition, it can inform how this problem can be addressed in the education and training of new teachers (Granström, 2013). Hakvoort, Larson and Lundstrom (2020) argue that there are nine different ways of understanding visible emerging conflicts and form a professional language with which to discuss these kinds of conflicts. These nine could be divided into three clusters: *the social practice of the classroom*, *something that stems from outside the classroom*, and something that characterizes *all human interaction*.

Lewi (1989) argues that public school curricula have traditionally treated conflict as a body of knowledge rather than an opportunity for skill development. Increasingly, however, programs that feature mediation, cooperative learning, and cross-cultural communication have become more common. Those designing conflict resolution (CR) curricula must carefully consider purpose, audience, and outcomes.

An interesting article proposes solving conflicts through role-playing games in which children, parents and the teacher participate (Borbely et al. 2005). They used conflict resolution role play vignettes to examine associations between students' conflict resolution effectiveness and social skills. Vignettes covered 3 social contexts, conflict with a peer (disagreement over activities), with a parent (rise in allowance), and with a teacher (low grade on report). They concluded that students were more often effective in resolving conflict with peers than with parents. Another conflict resolution strategy is presented by Droisy and Gaudron (2003) who propose a father-child collaboration and co-construction. In the UK, Sellman (2011) published an article about a study conducted at nine schools (seven primary, two secondary) which had previously implemented a peer mediation service for students experiencing interpersonal conflict. The research findings highlighted the need for realistic anticipation of the degree of cultural transformation required to fully support studemnts' empowerment initiatives in schools. Peer mediation was most successful in schools where there was a considerable shift in the division of labor, accompanied by the production of new cultural tools that promoted new ways of thinking, speaking and acting with a view to conflict.

Some countries (e.g. USA) implemented school conflict resolution programs and the Association for Conflict Resolution sets standards for conflict resolution based on Peer Mediation Programs. These programs aim to teach students to manage conflicts and find peaceful solutions to their problems. Thus Hart and Gunty (1997) analyze the impact of the Peer Mediation Program in an elementary school. In 1994 Johnson, Johnson, Dudley and Akicgoz conducted research on the effects of conflict resolution training on elementary school students. The peer-mediation training program was implemented in four classrooms in an American, suburban, middle-class elementary school. The training focused on negotiation and mediation procedures and skills and showed to be successful. The students were able to transfer the procedures and skills and apply them in real conflicts among classmates, reducing the number of conflicts referred to teachers. Discipline problems that previously drained teachers' attention, time, and energy were eliminated as students became much more autonomous in managing their conflicts constructively. Johnson et al. (1995) studied the effect of the Peer Mediation Program in elementary schools in the western United States, indicating that students who successfully learned the negotiation and mediation procedures, were able to apply the procedures in current conflict situations, and maintained this knowledge throughout the academic year.

In a recent article Ay et al. (2019) argue that conflicts in schools cannot be resolved by constructive and peaceful means and teachers cannot support students sufficiently. Mayorga (2010) describes the effectiveness of peer mediation and how it may play a role in helping students resolve conflict in a constructive rather than a destructive manner.

It seems that the Peer Mediation Program also has the effect of reducing aggressive behavior in children. Some authors argue that there are gender differences in the effectiveness of these programs either due to aggressive behavior (Klein et al. 2009) or communication problems (Breaz, 2019b). The results obtained by Klein et al (2009) suggest that the impact of the intervention is gender-related. According to teachers' evaluations there was an improvement of prosocial behavior of boys in the intervention classes. In addition, they showed a decrease in direct and indirect aggression and victimization. In contrast, teachers reported a deterioration of prosocial behavior as well as an increase in direct and indirect aggression among the girls. In contrast, teachers reported deterioration of prosocial behavior as well as an increase in direct and indirect aggression among the girls. Breaz (2019a) argues that there is a close relationship between the family educational climate and deviant behavior of children.

Turnuklu et al. (2011) analyze the effects of Conflict Resolution and Peer Mediation (CRPM) training on the levels of aggression of 10-11-year-old Turkish primary school students. Data analyses revealed that CRPM training was effective in lowering the aggression scale scores of the students. Boys seem to have benefited more from the training than girls. CRPM training was found to reduce student aggression which may lead to more constructive, restorative and peaceful behavior in classroom and school settings. Since less energy and time will have to be allocated to resolving problem behavior, academic success may increase, and a safer school atmosphere may be attained. Similarly, Schellenberg et al. (2007) examined the effectiveness of an existing peer mediation program in a diverse, suburban elementary school, concluding that all mediation sessions were successful in resolving conflict, and mediators as well as participants viewed the peer mediation program as valuable.

Turk (2018) evaluated the effects of conflict resolution, peace education and peer mediation in a meta-analysis paper on 23 studies that were determined to be in accordance with the study criteria. According to research findings conflict resolution, peace education and peer mediation education programs have a wide range of effect on students' conflict resolution skills. It may be stated that conflict resolution, peace education or peer mediation is effective in the constructive development of students' conflict resolution skills.

Tzuriel and Shamir (2007) argued that peer mediation with young children is a relatively novel approach aimed at teaching young children how to mediate to their peers. The main benefits of peer mediation are in developing children's mediation teaching style and cognitive modifiability. Higgins and Priest (1990) said that violent incidents at schools have adverse effects on the physical and psychological health of students while also preventing the perception of schools as safe locations and hindering the education process. Hence, it is a topic that concerns the society as a whole. Perceptions and opinions regarding the increase in violent incidents at schools around the world result in increased attention to this issue.

Peer conflict is not necessarily a bad thing; disagreement and conflict are part of life, and children and adolescents need to develop skills to resolve disagreements (Tezer and Demir, 2001). However, peer conflict can cause significant emotional and physical harm and can lead to aggressive behaviors when youth and children lack the social skills necessary to cope with their frustrations. To prevent peer conflict and facilitate the development of peer support systems, create age-based programs that teach social skills (Troop-Gordon, Ladd, 2005). For elementary school-age children, social skills include building friendships, being supportive, emotion regulation, and social problem solving skills. In elementary school-age children, the types of social environments that most often give rise to conflicts are related to the following circumstances: possession and use of objects; limited resources, such as toys and games; negative interactions with peers, such as aggression, jealousy, and exclusion from groups; and violation of rules. (Alexander and McConnell, 1993; Shantz, 1987).

Research has revealed that there are also gender differences between boys and girls in conflict involvement. Thus: boys tend to engage in more disputes related to status or dominance, such as arguing over who is better at specific sports, whereas girls tend to engage in more disputes related to relational issues, such as disclosing a secret or not being invited to a party (Noakes and Rinaldi, 2006). Boys tend to engage in aggression by physically hurting others, whereas girls tend to display more relational aggression through social exclusion or spreading rumors (Sims, Hutchins, Taylor, 1998). Because girls engage in more relational than physical aggression, they are often better at hiding aggressive activities from observing adults and are thus less likely to be given consequences for this behavior (Pepler and Craig, 1995).

Hypothesis and objectives

The main purpose of the research was to teach children coping techniques with conflict and their peaceful and amicable solution methods. It has been hypothesized that if a conflict counseling and mediation program is introduced at the class level, the number of conflicts and their intensity will decrease.

Sample

Two classes from a general school were studied - an experimental class (EC) and control (CC). The classes had an approximately equal number of children: 23 for EC and 22 for CC, with ages between 8-9 years (3rd graders).

Methodology

The conflicts were noted for a month and then their classification was made according to their duration. Considering that in the literature, conflicts are not identified as having an aggressive side, these types of actions were excluded from the research. The intensity of the conflicts was assessed according to their duration: one day - mild conflicts; 1-3 days medium conflicts, over three days - severe conflicts.

At EC we worked for a month to develop some conflict management skills in children. The children involved in the conflicts were advised by the social worker. During the class, conflict resolution activities were carried out twice a week. These consisted of proposing for children a conflict situation and then suggesting solutions to resolve the situation without reaching the conflict escalation.

Results and discussions

As mentioned above, the conflicts between children during a month were registered for both EC and CC classes. In total, there was approximate equal number of recorded conflicts: 73 at CC and 77 at EC. The conflicts were then classified according to their duration (Table 1).

Table 1. The number and classification of conflicts during the initial phase

Conflict intensity	EC	CC
Light	33	31
Medium	28	30
Severe	16	12
Total	77	73

We observed that in both groups, the light conflicts predominate (EC - 33 situations; CC - 31 situations) and medium conflicts (EC - 28 situations and CC - 30 situations). This shows us that, in general, conflicts were resolved on the same day or within three days of their occurrence. However, there are also a number of severe conflicts 16 for EC and 12 for CC whose resolution took more than three days and the child's upset lasted longer.

The reasons for these conflicts were diverse: “he took my pencil or my rubber”, “he made me spell wrong”, “my homework notebook was hidden”, “they didn't let me play with them”, “I don't like him/her”. We noticed that in general, the nature of conflicts for children from our sample is similarly to that described by Alexander and McConnell (1993) and Schantz (1987).

The intervention for EC lasted for six weeks. During this period, the children involved in conflicts were called by the social worker and they were offered individual counseling sessions focusing on understanding the causes and the nature of the conflict reported and developing alternative ways to conflict resolution in supporting an optimal peer relationship with classmates. In addition, twice a week, the entire class was subject to sessions on developing skills for conflict management. During these teaching sessions the children proposed various conflict situations and then suggested ways to solve them. Role play has often been used to illustrate a conflict situation and its resolution. In this way, the children found the sessions more interesting and became more engaged.

In the same time, CC group did not benefit from any kind of program focused on conflict resolution and they used to carry out their regular school program.

After six weeks, the conflicts between the two classes were registered again for a month. These were again classified according to the criteria established at the beginning of the research.

The results of the intervention program were evaluated according to the number of conflicts and their intensity at EC after completing the intervention program. These are shown in figure 1.

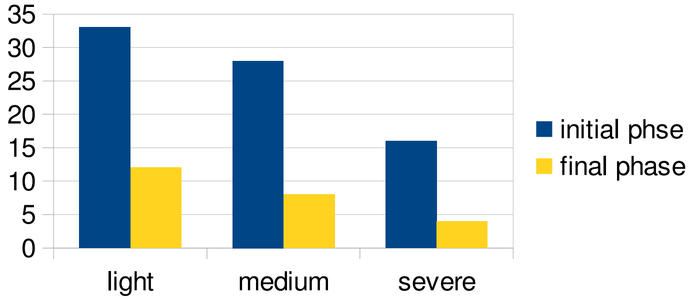

Figure 1. The number and classification of conflicts for EC group

There is a significant decrease in the number of conflicts: from 75 to 24, almost three times fewer conflicts in the final phase compared to the initial phase. The conflicts that were recorded are mild and medium range (12 and 8, respectively). There are still 4 severe conflicts whose duration was longer than three days and which had as subject the fact that the children did not like one or another of their colleagues.

To emphasize that the results obtained by us are really due to the method we used, we will compare the final results of the experimental class with the results obtained in the control group. The comparative results between the two classes in the final phase are presented in figure 2.

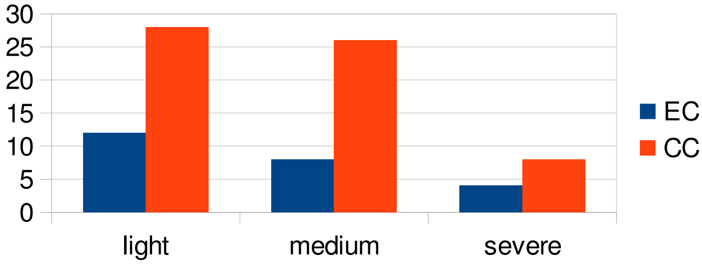

Figure 2. The number and classification of conflicts at final evaluation

We can notice that in the control group there is also a decrease in the number of conflicts, but this is much smaller than in the experimental group. The number of conflicts between children in the CC is maintained approximately at the same level and a decrease in them is due to the evolution and natural growth of children, accompanied by an intellectual maturation. However, for the EC, the decrease in the number and intensity of conflicts is significant, demonstrating that the children have learned strategies for the friendly management of conflicts and for the peaceful resolution of the stressful situations that may occur in their everyday’s school life.

The hypothesis formulated at the beginning of the research was therefore validated by this small study: the counseling and mediation sessions introduced to the class led to a decrease in the number of conflicts and their intensity. The main objective was achieved: children learned strategies for friendly conflict management, which helped them to achieve assertive behaviors and to better integrate into the daily life of the class.

Conclusions

The programs of mediation of conflicts between children in the primary cycle must be part of the daily activity of social workers in schools. We believe that such intervention programs can be easily used by social workers, thus contributing to the creation of a truly academic climate in the school, in which children learn and acquire social skills that will help them integrate more easily into adult life.

We believe that such intervention programs should be piloted, together with the social workers, at macro level as well in order to ensure that all schools are receiving proper training and to ensure that the program is included in the school's curricula. We also believe that is important to integrate teaching children social and emotional skills, because this seems to be something that they are struggling with when they are at school. We recommend piloting an approach in which skills are taught for conflict resolution and where students are also taught the differences. By perfecting these skills, children can become themselves mediators in conflicts between their peers, helping them understand the causes of the conflict and providing them with opportunities to resolve the conflicts so that they can change their behavior into one positive and constructive.

Brackett and Salovey (2006) proved that there is a connection between classroom climate and students academic achievement. This means that by helping children managing conflicts, leads to a better relationship among students and furthermore help students to achieve better results.

Acknowledgement: We hereby state that the subjects involved in our research were informed about the voluntary character of their participation in this research, about the understanding of information and of that fact that withdrawal from research is possible at any time without negative consequences upon the participant. The research complied with all ethical research standards, the research participants/participants` guardians giving their consent to participate in the research.

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GIFTED CHILDREN EDUCATION IN EARLY CHILDHOOD-PRACTICAL STRATEGIES

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Abstract:*The identification and education of gifted children at an early age remains a challenge and a priority objective of Romanian education. Undoubtedly, children have certain exceptional abilities when entering school, it is the educators` duty to identify these innate skills and to stimulate them so that they reach the performance level. The challenge of the school is to find the means and methods of early intervention to promote a differentiated education that will help the whole group to develop, but which will take into account individualities to promote learning according to the needs of the children. Stimulating the development of each child according to his/her abilities requires a flexible curriculum and differentiated and personalized teaching strategies. In our article we will outline some strategies used in educating gifted children by focusing education and instruction on the child.*

Key words: *identification; education; strategies; special education; stimulation.*

1.Introduction

Early identification of gifted children is the first step in their proper education and in influencing the development of innate skills. Identifying and educating gifted children is a challenge for educators no matter what position they are in, parent, guardian, teacher. Family, of course, represents the most important pillar in the child's education. Education starts at home, in the family with examples, lifestyle, rules of behaviour and an orientation towards the development of children's abilities. School, however, is the organization that has the most appropriate levers for identifying gifted children and for stimulating the development of innate skills (Davis, J. L., Moore, J. L., 2016). These predispositions are often more difficult to recognize, which is why identifying gifted children by the school is a challenge that educators face. Such identification shall take place before these skills diminish, dissipate, and become unrecognizable. It is known that if you do not intervene early to develop the skills, they may remain hidden or may even be lost (Gagné, F. 2009).

In the early ages when we refer to giftedness, in fact, we refer to the child`s precocity in a certain area or in general. At this age when the child is experiencing unprecedented development both psychically and physically, it is difficult to identify the giftedness. Some children can be identified at the age of three by skills that go beyond their biological age. We are often surprised by these children who know how to read, count, ask questions above their age level. Giftedness means a very rapid development compared to most children of the same chronological age, showing an uncommon curiosity, quick learning abilities, but especially a completely different ability of seeing the world around them as compared to children of similar age. In addition to these specific features, the gifted presents an inexhaustible energy, the desire to discover how things work, exasperating adults with inexhaustible questions. At the same time, they have an exaggerated sensitivity and an inclination towards perfectionism. These specific characteristics make them get bored quickly, to experience frustration or even depressive states of mind (Ford, D. Y. 2013). Identifying the gift is important because it requires specialized interventions.

2.Identifying Giftedness

2.1. Specific traits of giftedness

For school, the identification of gifted children is a challenge, and the identification process is often difficult and not eloquent. The identification of the gifted requires investment of time and resources (J. Swanson, 2016). Authentic identification is achieved through a complex set of evaluation means over an extended period of time. Cognitive, motor and social development is rapid and varied at young children. It is very possible that one aspect of cognitive development may not be obvious at one point and in the following moments it will shock through accuracy. That is why the test results are fluctuating, or they do not give real results. A true identification of the gifted can be considered when the results are conclusive following the observations made over a longer period, during different activities, in different circumstances, following verbal behaviours, taking into account the parents`, relatives` references, analysing the children's products.

2.2. Parents references

The discussions with the parents are most often revealing. They can confirm the observations made by the teachers in the classroom regarding the children`s behaviour and their unusual abilities. Of course, all parents' stories must be passed through the rational filter, often out of too much love for the children, they exaggerate their skills and therefore are not objective. But in most cases parents are realistic predictors of children's developmental abilities and needs. That is why teachers need to pay attention and note down these references and use them for confirmation and for an individualized educational path, following the progress of each child.

2.3. Children`s Products

The portfolio with the children's works is another way to record the children`s progress, to detect the specific skills used during the individualized intervention by developing an educational path adapted to the needs of the gifted child. The portfolio represents a collection of children's works (paintings, drawings, practical works, writings, stories, observations, etc.), which can be done within the formal, non-formal or home-based activities. All observations must be noted in the child`s personal observation sheet. Teachers will follow: language development level, problem solving skills, level and depth of questions, accuracy of information, logic and relevance of the child's answers, level of creativity, focus on the task, interest in spiritual and existential aspects, objectivity in self-assessment, preference for complex tasks, interest in novelty, ability to essentialize, ability to interpret phenomena and explain images. Depending on all these observations, one can proceed to the elaboration of an individualized plan of educational interventions in kindergarten. For educational interventions, the general principles of intervention should be taken into account in the case of the gifted: individualization of learning, educational alternatives, individualized curriculum, personalization of learning in the classroom, child-centred learning. Good practices in the field highlight appropriate strategies for stimulating skills that effectively contribute to the development of their skills without overstating children's tasks.

3.Strategies for developing gifted children's abilities

3.1. The role of educators

Educators are the decisive factors in identifying and educating the gifted (Henshon, S. E. 2010).. They represent the people who are appointed and prepared to intervene for the benefit of the children, they create a liaison between kindergarten, family and community. Educators have the methodological and pedagogical intervention tools to help the gifted integrate into a community, they know the most appropriate strategies of educational intervention to stimulate and develop the child`s native potential. It` s a challenge and a great moral and social responsibility for a teacher to work with gifted children. The gifted are an asset for the society, they are the engine of humanity's progress. This is why it is very important for children to attend kindergarten. Educators have the skills to work with the gifted, using differentiation methods and personalize the educational path of each gifted child.

3.2.Methods for educating gifted children

The most commonly used methods of educational intervention are: acceleration, centres of interest, special classes for the gifted, mentoring.

3.2.1. Acceleration

This method consists in passing in an accelerated way through the curriculum considered to be common trunk. Some children may skip a class, or enrol earlier in the preparatory class (J. VanTassel-Baska, 2015). Unfortunately, the Romanian educational system does not allow to skipping a class or two. This method is considered to be *"appropriate educational planning. It means matching the level and complexity of the curriculum with the readiness and motivation of the student"*. (S., Steenbergen-Hu, & S. M., Moon, 2011)

3.2.2. Interest centres

In these centres children have different teaching material at hand and they can choose to work at any center they want, as long as they want and also have the possibility to move to another center if they get bored. These centers offer children the opportunity to interact, work together, collaborate or if they can work properly themselves. Each child has the opportunity to work at his own pace. This form of learning is***"most effective and efficient means for schools to provide more challenging coursework, giving these children access to advanced content and providing them with a peer group."*** (Lee, S. Y., Olszewski-Kubilius, P., & Thomson, D. T. 2012).

3.2.3. Special classes for the gifted

A number of researchers support the idea of special classes for the gifted, but some ethical issues arise, the segregation of children, their differentiation into elitist classes leads to various problems of discrimination, even if it is a positive one. On the other hand, special classes for children with giftedness in a certain area are undoubtely a great opportunity. They have specialized teachers who know how to work with the gifted, specially trained teachers to teach these students, the level of the class is homogeneous, the students have common interests. All these are advantages for such classes. In Romania, an alternative to these classes are the Centers of Excellence, where gifted children can participate in specialized classes. A shortcoming is that these centers are more concerned with children gifted in the fields of mathematics, physics, chemistry, or giftedness is not restricted to these areas, it occurs in all segments as H. Gardner demonstrates in his work Multiple Intelligences (Gardner, H., 2006). There are other options as well, such as children's clubs, afterschool programmes, Saturday schools, or summer programs, online learning etc.

3.2.4.Mentoring

Through mentoring, the mentor-teacher guides the work with the gifted persons after a special school program which is called *an individualized learning plan*. This syllabus contains enriched, developed, individualized content, learning tasks with higher degrees of difficulty than those stipulated in the classroom syllabus, graded on learning units and time units according to the subject matter to be taught. The mentor will guide the gifted in in the acquisition of knowledge, capabilities and skills, in the process of skill development and development of native skills by:

- Teaching them how to learn;
- Making them aware of their personal learning style;
- Teaching them how to use the most efficient learning methods and procedures;
- Making them aware of their strong and weak points;
- Teaching them overcome their limits;
- Teaching them objective self-assessment.

Mentors are able to develop a programme for the personal development of the gifted, they know how to use modern methods to help them learn more efficiently, what processes and techniques to use to build transferable communication abilities, teamwork, learning, time management, problem solving, negotiation, listening, creativity, computer use skills, etc., what educational means to use to facilitate the development of the gifted according to their exceptional endowment. The practice has shown that the gifted who are mentored achieve better results, become efficient in solving the different learning situations they encounter at schooldaily, become more self-reliant, more confident and participate more actively in school and extracurricular activities, as well as gain self-esteem. The mentor guides the gifted to the preferred methods by which he can learn effectively, so as to accumulate the information needed, to build the skills and competences which are necessary for their personal development and the development of their innate giftedness (National Association for Gifted Children, 2010).

A relationship based on trust is developed between the gifted and their mentor. Acceptance of the gifted as they are leads to favourable results. The mentor's priority objective is to constantly guide the gifted to develop according to their giftedness. In the mentoring activity, the mentor pursues the permanent guidance of the gifted to achieve the planned and projected goals in the personalized curriculum, stimulating learning by using the most suitable methods to make development more efficient. They use effectively adapted educational means, corrective adjustments that are necessary during the application of the mentoring programme. (Adele Faber, Elaine Mazlish, 2002).

The mentor guides the gifted towards the acquisition of skills that develop their critical thinking, sense of responsibility and objective self-assessment. The teacher-mentors only intervene if they notice confusions, gaps, misinterpretations, blockages, distance from the work task. Important is the aspect that the mentor involves the students in making decisions regarding the ways to solve the different problems. It is known that due to their extremely sensitive psychological nature, the gifted present an increased emotional lability, so the mentor intervenes with a great deal of pedagogical tact and chooses the appropriate educational intervention methods (A. Robinson, 2010). During the mentoring activity, the teacher-mentor is moderator, coordinator, mediator, facilitator and counselor (supporting the gifted students in difficulty).

Conclusion

In order to really interfere in the preparation of the gifted children it is necessary to carry out an early identification plan, maybe even in kindergarten. Once identified as gifted, they must participate in activities that help them develop in their field of endowment to the level of excellence. It is not enough for a child to possess exceptional skills, they must be developed through sustained work, study, perseverance and psycho-pedagogical guidance.

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READING FICTION WORKS BY TEACHERS - *LOISIR* (LEISURE) AND NECESSITY

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”Not having anything around to read is dangerous: you have to content yourself with life itself, and that can lead you to take risks.” (Michel Houellebecq[6])

Abstract: *The benefits of reading fiction are today unquestionable. Numerous studies show this. Reading fiction can be a form of therapy, a special way to meet and understand others, to develop the empathy, to improve thinking and creativity, to avoid / release stress, to risk less to suffer Alzheimer's disease, to open one's mind, to improve capacity of communication, to feel happier, to be more informed, to learn more and more. The extent to which these things happen is variable. What is appropriate for an IT guy or for a lawyer is not usually/necessarily suitable for a teacher. The present article aims to provide some benchmarks regarding books that every teacher should read. At the same time, we will present a taxonomy and an example of the works that a teacher is due to read, both to guide the career beginner to organize their reading, and for those tempted to become teachers.*

Key-words: *must reading; teachers; need; necessity; self-/other's development*.

Like many specialists working for others, starting from certain books regarded as either canonical or supposedly *sine qua non* for the field they operate in (actors, priests, historians, etc.), the teacher is required to continually use books for both their teaching endeavour, the achievement of their educational objectives, the updating the acquired knowledge, and especially their emotional balance, transforming the time into *loisir* (leisure) and finding the cheapest and most efficient resources to complete the sabbatical year, in the cultural spaces where this is not granted. We speak, therefore, about both the teacher-researcher and the teacher-person, in search of his spiritual fulfillment through the book.

[6]In Romanian.: *Să trăieşti fără lectură este periculos; trebuie să te limitezi la viaţă, şi nu e lipsit de riscuri* - Michel Houellebecq, *Platforma*, translated by Emanoil Marcu, Polirom Publishig House, Iași, 2003, p. 82

The reasons why a teacher needs to read are numerous: the need to know the curricular provisions year by year, to know the school textbooks they work with (even though these are mainly student guides, are used with the teacher's support, and the synopsis and use directions are meant for all - teacher, student, tutor), the auxiliaries they use, the supporting texts (some large ones) to which it refers, the innovations in the psycho-pedagogical and teaching field, the recent innovations that take place in the scientific, technological field, and from critical exegesis, the aesthetic transformations of the artistic domain, but also their well-being and emotional comfort.

Taxonomy of Works that a Teacher Should Read

A first category is represented by the "**canonical literature" for the teacher**. This includes the curricular documents (frame plan, school curricula, methodological guides and letters, textbooks, auxiliaries, etc.), but also the integral works which the textbooks supporting texts are parts of (we mainly consider here the disciplines of the *Language and communication* curricular area)[7].

At the same time, it is also instrumental to find in this category the scientific literature that can innovate certain contents of the taught disciplines, through the discoveries and inventions that require the updating of some technical and scientific fields.

Equally important are the legislative regulations regarding the conduct of the teaching process (*Law of National Education*, various orders of minister, etc.). In this is a series of documents that underpin the implementation of current school curricula, such as *The European Language Portfolio*[8], especially addressing teachers who teach disciplines in the *Language and communication* curriculum area.

Each teacher active in secondary education[9] should know the *Documentation of the foundation of the new framework plan for the secondary school* (2016)[10], following *the focus on competences, rethinking the time budget allocated by the student to the learning; adjusting of the curricular offer at the school level and the integrated approach (mono, pluri, trans-disciplinary).*

At the same time, depending on the level of education the teacher targets, they need to know the *Graduate Training Profile*[11], which presents the desirable expectations on the graduate of each cycle of education (preschool, primary, secondary, and high school), in conformity with the cognitive development of the subject of learning, and the curricular and law provisions.

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[7] Obviously, when we deal with parts of literary works (usually, novels).

[8] https://www.coe.int/en/web/portfolio

[9] Equally, the highschool teacher should know this document, in order to have realistic and updated expectations regarding the vision on the profile of the secondary school graduate.

[10] http://imake.lefo.ro/~laurentiu.bulgaru/wp/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/2.-Document_fundamentare_plan-cadru-gimnaziu_ISE.pdf

[11] http://www.ise.ro/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Profilul-de-formare-al-absolventului_final.pdf

With Romania being part of the European Union, it is necessary that the formal education take into account the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2006 on key competences for lifelong learning (2006/962 / EC)* [12]*, including Key Competences for Lifelong Learning - The European Reference Framework*[13].

By proposing to identify the literary texts which can stimulate the development of the students' literary competences and the conditions allowing it, the *European Literary Framework for Teachers in Secondary Education* project[14], including participants from Romania, presents the *European Framework for Literature European Teachers* and draws up national reading lists for each country in the project, but also international reading lists, for 'Europe', the results being worth noting especially by the Romanian teacher.

A second category is the **books recommended for children**[15], what we call "additional reading", both within optional disciplines and in other activities (school or extra-curricular).

For example, some publishers propose the *Reading Club*, an activity that promotes the reading certain literary works, either on the basis of previous readers' preferences, or by similarity with works that enjoy a wide appreciation, or aiming a certain education of the readers' taste.

Another category is **the studies that facilitate the teaching process**. Because scientific discoveries and inventions are more and more numerous, and technology hypnotically draws attention from the subject of learning, it is necessary to identify ways to make learning contents accessible and their presentation attractive. The student should be properly motivated (medium), preferably intrinsic, stimulated to acquire more and more knowledge, skills and abilities, in a desirable way, pleasant to him and within the reach of the teacher.

Here we find works in the field of psychology, pedagogy, special teaching, various sciences, but also interdisciplinary and motivational studies[16]. Some of

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[12] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/?uri=celex:32006H0962

[13] idem

[14] http://ro.literaryframework.eu/projectinfo.html

[15] Fairytales, short stories, novels (e.g.: *Billionaire Boy,* by David Walliams; works of Jules Verne, Al. Dumas, Paul Feval etc.)

[16] Studies which facilitate the teaching process:

Botiş Matanie, Adina; Axente, Anca, *Disciplinarea pozitivă sau cum să disciplinezi fără să răneşti*, Ed. ASCR & COGNITROM, Cluj-Napoca, 2009; Colceag, Florin; Alexandru, Florin, *Copilul tău este un geniu*, Ed. Tikaboo, București, 2016; Constantin, Theodor, *Johnny Boambă,* Ed. Adevărul Holding, Colecţia Adevărul, Bucureşti, 2008; Dahl, Roald, *Matilda*, GRUPUL EDITORIAL ART, 2016; Faber, Adele; Mazlish, Elaine, *Comunicarea eficientă cu copiii. Acasă şi la şcoală*, Ed. Curtea Veche, Bucureşti, 2013; Gardner, Howard, *Inteligenţe multiple. Noi orizonturi,* Ed. Sigma, Bucureşti, 2006; Goleman, Daniel, *Inteligenţa emoţională,* în româneşte de Irina-Margareta Nistor, Ed. Curtea Veche, Bucureşti, 2008; Greene, Ross W., *Cum să îmbunătăţim disciplina copiilor la şcoală* (trad.: Roxana Cristian), Ed. Orizonturi, Bucureşti, 2015; Lanteri, Linda, them have limited applicability to a certain cultural area, others seem universally valid [17]. We subscribe to the *Ten books every teacher should read*[18] recommendation.

The books *en vogue* in the students' world [19] should also be read by the teacher, both to offer a personal example, and to properly motivate them by knowing their preferences.

Any teacher would agree to know **the masterpieces of universal literature[20]**, both to guide their students' reading and for their general culture. The

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Dezvoltarea inteligenței emoționale a copiilor. Tehnici de a cultiva puterea lăuntrică a copiilor, trad. Mihaela-Gabriela Deniz, Curtea Veche Publishing, Bucureşti, 2017; Petrea, Irina, *Și tu poți fi supernanny 1. Cum să-ți crești copilul*, Ed. Trei, 2012; Law Nolte, Dorothy; Harris, Rachel, *Copiii învaţă ceea ce trăiesc. Educaţia care insuflă valori*, Ed. Humanitas, Bucureşti, 2007; Pânişoară, Ion-Ovidiu, *Profesorul de succes. 59 de principii de pedagogie practică*, Ed. Polirom, Iaşi, 2009 etc.

[17] For example, to stimulate the student's involvment in their own education by verbal congratulation and hand shake is only allowed in countries such practice is usual. Treating the subject of formation with respect and empathy is a successful practice anywhere.

[18] 1. *Why Don't Students Like School?* by Daniel Willingham; **2.** *The Hidden Lives of Learners* by Graham Nuthall; 3. *Trivium 21c* by Martin Robinson; 4. *Embedded Formative Assessment* by Dylan Wiliam; 5. *Seven Myths About Education* by Daisy Christodoulou; 6. *Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn* by John Hattie and Gregory Yates; 7. *Bringing Words to Life* by Isabel L Beck, Margaret G McKeown and Linda Kucan; 8. *Make It Stick* by Peter C Brown, Henry L Roediger and Mark A McDaniel; 9. *Urban Myths About Learning and Education* by Pedro De Bruyckere, Paul A Kirschner and Casper D Hulshof; 10. *Why Knowledge Matters* by ED Hirsch - https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/2017/aug/15/ten-books-every-teacher-should-read (accesat: 23.05.2019)

[19] E.g.: Johnson, Pete, *Metode de a învinge plictiseala la școală. Ghidul lui Harvey*, trad. Sorin Petrescu, Ed. Corint Junior, Bucureşti, 2013; Kinney, Jeff, *Jurnalul unui puști,* trad. Andra Matzal, Ed. Arthur, București, 2010; Renee Russell, Rachel, *Însemnările unei puştoaice. Povestiri dintr-o viață nu chiar atât de fabuloasă*, trad. Matei Sâmihăian, Ed. Arthur, București, 2019; Rowlling, J. K., *Harry Poter* - GRUPUL EDITORIAL ART; Leaf, Munro, *Cum să-ți faci viața extraordinară în școala primară. O mulțime de idei grozave pentru a fi isteț, puternic și sănătos*, trad. Julia Gretsch, Ed. Corint Junior, Bucureşti, 2013; Boucher, Fr., *Cartea care te face să iubești cărțile chiar dacă nu îți place să citești,* Creative Publishing, 2014; seria *Nic Năstrușnic, by Francesca Simon.*

[20] Examples are many, mainly from early literature, whose reading is still enjoyable today *One Thousand and One Nights, The Golden Donkey* (Apuleius), but also books known all over the world: *Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupery, *Idiotul, The Brothers Karamazov* by Feodor Dostoievski; *Madame Bovary,* by Gustave Flaubert; *The Complete Works* by William Shakespeare; *Quo vadis*, by Henryk Sienkiewicz, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy, *Auto da Fé* (*The Blinding*) by Elias Canetti, *The Human Comedy* by Honoré de Balzac, fiction works by Mircea Eliade, to which one can add contemporary works which, by popularity and sales, are close to this status (e.g.: *The Kite Runner*, 2003, by Khaled Hosseini).

fact that a book stands the test of time (by being read throughout the time), and thus acquires its mastery status, recommends it for discovering the aspects that confer its permanence, but also as a reference artistic product.

The literature required for professional development is needed especially when the professional development of the teacher takes place horizontally (accumulation of new skills and the development of existing ones), and optional, when the professional development of the teacher takes place vertically (acceding in certain hierarchical functions). The first situation, as a rule, includes **the studies that facilitate the teaching process** (discussed above), to which certain recommended materials in specific programs / training modules are being added (if the teacher aims to accumulate professional credits in this way). In the second situation, the teacher is required to read the recommended works for the position they choose to accede to, these works being predominantly legislative /normative[21].

A teacher should also read a series of **motivational books that contribute to their well-being or emotional health[22]**, but also to those of the subjects of learning. The mental wear and tear given by repeated explanations on many occasions and year by year, the manifestation of empathy towards their students, as well as the continuous documentation and research, should be countered by activities that can keep an efficient teacher in the system, in proper mental health conditions, but also by their intrinsic motivation. Access to such activities can often be prohibitive, through costs, distance, scarcity, time, etc. That is why the call for such works is preferable and welcome!

In the immediate vicinity of the above category, there is **the *loisir* (leisure) literature and what we enjoy/induce our delight**[23] consisting of magazines (of any kind), mundane news, hagiographies, daily tips; fiction[24] or other works. What we like / enjoy differs from individual to individual, reading being a way of consuming / receiving an artistic product from the cheapest (sometimes even free[25]), easier to achieve (at your own pace, at individually decided time intervals,

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[21] For example: to know the *opis of documents of the school manager*, the laws which regulate their activity etc.

[22] Dyer, Wayne W., *Există o soluție spirituală pentru orice problemă*, trad. Dana Dobre, Ed. Act și Politon, București, 2016; Duhigg, Charles, *Puterea obișnuinței. De ce facem ceea ce facem în viata si în afaceri,* trad. Dan Craciun, Ed. Publica, București, 2016; Newberg, Andrew; Waldman, Mark Robert, *Cuvintele îți modelează creierul. 12 strategii de conversație menite să dea încredere, să aplaneze conflictele și să consolideze intimitatea*, trad. Ioana Schiau, Ed. Curtea Veche, București, 2016; Seligman, Martin, *Optimismul se învață*, Ed. Humanitas, București, 2004

[23] Barthes, Roland, *Plăcerea textului,* in Romanian by Marian Papahagi, Ed. Echinox, Cluj-Napoca, 1994

[24] For example, works of i Osho, Paulo Coelho, Dan Brown etc.

[25] By borrowing books from public or virtual libraries, or from aquiantances, by reading free *pdf*, free gifts or promotional books etc.

in various positions, etc.), and generally with positive consequences[26], compared to other types of cultural consumption, requiring a certain physical training, travel, high costs [27] etc.

Conclusions.

The bibliography a teacher should read is comprehensive, constantly dynamic and open. It is updated as the pace of discoveries and inventions, the changes of vision on the educational ideal, but also according to the evolution of art and individual preferences. Moreover, a series of legislative and methodological norms vector this reading.

We consider that at least the categories identified and exemplified in this article constitute a lasting reference for the teacher's reading delimited by *Loisir (Leisure) and Necessity*.

Beyond the literature I referred to in this study, even following the reading the novel *Matilda*, by Roald Dahl, we appreciate that the eponymous film based on this book (1996, directed by Danny DeVito) presents an achievement worth knowing by any (future) teacher, because, by visual and audible channels, and the exceptional distribution, it leads to much more lasting impressions than the individual representations of the reader (formed by reading). It joins other similar achievements, which will be the subject of a future study.

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https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:c11090 (accessed: 13.03.2020)

http://ro.literaryframework.eu/Matrix/show/lower/level1/didactics.html (accessed: 19.03.2020)

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[26] We take into account the act of reading from a print, which is not a substitute for other vital activities!

[27] For example, attending a show implies a series of expenses further than the mere cost of the ticket.

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PREVENTING ABSENTEEISM IN THE PRIMARY SCHOOL BY SOCIAL WORK COUNSELING

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Abstract: *Absenteeism is a major problem that affects all levels of the education system from primary to university. Chronic absenteeism leads to gaps in knowledge and difficulties in obtaining adequate school performance.*

Two third classes from a general school in Arad were studied: an experimental one and a control one. In the experimental class the children with absenteeism were advised by the social worker for 2 months. At the same time there were five counseling sessions with their parents and a program of interest stimulation for the school was introduced to the class.

The obtained results confirm that by the assistance counseling the number of absences of the children can be reduced and the chronic absenteeism can be prevented.

Keywords: *school children; primary school; absenteeism; social work counseling.*

Theoretical framework

While there is no consistent definition of chronic absenteeism, either the academic literature defines a chronically absent student as one who misses at least 10 percent of the school year. on defining problematic levels of chronic absenteeism for a school (Bauer et al. 2018).

Frequent absences in the primary grades are associated with school disengagement, academic failure, and eventual dropout (Cook et al, 2017). Frequent school absenteeism has immediate and long-term negative effects on academic performance, social functioning, high school and college graduation rates, adult income, health, and life expectancy.

Absenteeism from school is a serious public health issue for mental health professionals, physicians, and educators. The prevalence of unexcused absences from school exceeds that of major childhood behavior disorders and is a key risk factor for violence, injury, substance use, psychiatric disorders, and economic deprivation (Kearny, 2008).

Chronic absenteeism from school is a pervasive problem with complex causes and long-reaching consequences. School refusal has been associated with increased likelihood of engaging in criminal behavior, sexual risk behaviors, abuse of illicit substances, and dropout of school entirely (Kiani et al. 2018).

The study realized and presented by Muj, F. and Toderici, O. (2019) presents some of the causes of absenteeism and school dropout that Romanian pre-university education faces. Thus, it is specified that the lack of interest towards the school, various problems in the family, are the main causes of absenteeism that lead to school dropout.

Pellegrini (2007) comments on the behavior commonly known as school refusal. After reviewing its established descriptions, the article argues for a different definition, namely extended school non-attendance, which describes the visible behavior neutrally, aims to direct one's attention to the school environment, and stresses its persistent nature.

School absenteeism encompasses several terms such as school refusal, truancy and school phobia, all of which have been used inconsistently and confusingly in the past. Moreover, the question of how many days of absence can be seen as problematic remains unclear. Due to these definitional problems, available data is inconsistent. Therefore, the prevalence rates of school absenteeism can only be estimated (about 5% of all students). School absenteeism affects not only individual students, but also family, school and society structures (Lenzen, Brunner, Resch, 2016). Absenteeism and truancy can, on the other hand be correlated with contextual and aggregated characteristics at the school level (Hatos 2012).

Birioukov in 2016 also shows the problems related to the theoretical foundation of absenteeism. Absenteeism has been linked to diminished academic outcomes and is one of the leading causes of high school dropout. Although absenteeism is a serious one concern for educational scholars, the definitions of absences and their subtypes are inadequately developed in academic literature. The overreliance on excused / unexcused absences that posit the school and the family as the arbitrators of the validity of an absence.

Gubbels et al (2019) analyze the risk factors that can lead to absenteeism. School absenteeism and dropout are associated with many different life-course problems. To reduce the risk for these problems it is important to gain insight into risk factors for both school absenteeism and permanent school dropout. The findings of their study contribute to the fundamental knowledge of the etiology of school absenteeism and dropout which in turn contributes to a better understanding of the problematic development of adolescents.

Knollmann et al. (2019) argue that school attendance problems become manifest in many ways and are associated with multiple risk factors, calling for comprehensive assessment methods. They propose in their study to document the development of the inventory of school attendance problems, which assesses both the quality and function of a broad spectrum of school attendance problems.

Mauro and Machell (2019) highlights the many challenging issues faced by children who struggle to attend school. They integrate and explore recent trends in digital technology that both provide resources and challenges as children have more opportunity to connect to educational activities but also be distracted by them. Digital technology is part of the children’s’ life starts already at preschool years, the counseling of parents by social workers proved to be beneficial for the adequate socialization of the children (Goian, 2019). In case this does not happen, children are at risk of developing internet addiction, due to a low quality of family relationships and lack of social support (Tudorel, Vintila, 2018).

Researches show that there are both individual and social causes to justify this phenomenon. Individual causes can be mental or physical.

Chronic absenteeism appears to be driven by overlapping medical, individual, family, and social factors, including chronic illness, mental health conditions, bullying, perceived lack of safety, health problems or needs of other family members, inconsistent parenting, poor school climate, economic disadvantage, and unreliable transportation. If absenteeism is caused by chronic illness, management should include clear expectations about school attendance and care coordination with school personnel. Mental health conditions that interfere with school attendance can often be treated with cognitive behavior therapy and / or pharmacotherapy (Allen, Diamond-Myrsten, Rollins, 2018).

A 2014 study by Haagmans and Kamphuis reveals that frequent school absenteeism is associated with psychological problems.

Students who are chronically absent display high rates of psychiatric comorbidities, with anxiety disorders and disruptive behavioral disorders being particularly prevalent. Current data suggest that behavioral interventions, including social skills training, cognitive behavioral, and dialectical behavioral therapies are the primary treatment modalities, with the addition of pharmacological management when needed (Ozbas, 2010).

Stempel et al. (2017) studied the association between chronic school absenteeism and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) among school-age children. ACE exposure was associated with chronic school absenteeism in school-age children. To improve school attendance, along with future graduation rates and long-term health, these findings highlight the need for an interdisciplinary approach to address child adversity that involves pediatricians, mental health providers, schools, and public health partners.

In the same direction Crouch et al. (2019) confirms that ACEs can have an impact on childhood and adolescence, not just later in adulthood, as demonstrated by the association between ACEs and measures of school success. These findings further illuminate the connection between ACEs and childhood outcomes of education and health.

The most common psychic cause is the social anxiety of children. Diegel (2015) presents the criteria of anxiety-based absenteeism as well as problems of terminology and classification with emphasis on school phobia as a combination of separation anxiety and social anxiety. The multimodal treatment focuses on cognitive interventions, graduate exposure and close cooperation with teachers. The counselor is also in charge of the networking and cooperation of all concerned persons.

Lingerfeld and Hartung (2015) state that school refusal behaviors go beyond a child's dislike or disinterest in school. Their research investigated the underlying anxiety, depression, and social phobias that often accompany these behaviors and the importance of early recognition and treatment. Successful treatment and resolution of school refusal behaviors need to be a multidisciplinary approach. Teachers, administrators, guidance counselors, school nurses, and parents need to be involved in the diagnosis, treatment, and readmission processes.

Other studies link absenteeism and depression in children and adolescents. Depression in young people may lead to reduced school attendance through social withdrawal, loss of motivation, sleep disturbance and low energy. Findings suggest associations between depression and poor school attendance, particularly absenteeism and unexcused absences / truancy. Clinicians and school staff should be alert to the possibility of depression in children and adolescents with poor attendance (Finning et al., 2019).

Katz et al. (2016). state that pediatric consultations in school refusal cases need to explore the presenting medical symptoms and discuss with families any psychological function of the problems that have led to non-attendance. More chronic and persistent refusal often requires support from an extended team around the child, often requiring input from mental health professionals. Behavioral strategies are the recommended approach to improving school attendance and to address the underlying anxiety or depression, or both, that may be the root cause of their non-attendance.

Among the major physical problems affecting school attendance is mentioned in the obesity literature. An and col. (2017) argue that obesity may affect children's school attendance through its detrimental impact on their physical and mental health. The meta-analysis found that the odds of being absent from school were 27% and 54% higher among children with overweight and obesity than among their normal weight counterparts, respectively. Juvenile diabetes is a disease which will make a life change for the child with this diagnosis, but also for the entire family. Keeping the environment of these children as close to normal as possible, by accepting the diagnosis and manage the illness will make it possible for these children to also attend school normally without an excessive absenteeism (Vintila, 2009).

The research of Berendes et al. (2019) links absenteeism with gastrointestinal and respiratory illness. Their data underscore the importance of preventive measures, such as hand hygiene promotion and education, and the opportunity for both homes and schools to serve as an important point for implementation of public health preventive measures, including hand hygiene practice and education.

Allison and Attisha (2019) argue that there is a link between school attendance and good health. The rates of chronic absenteeism vary between states, communities, and schools, with significant disparities based on income, race, and ethnicity. Chronic school absenteeism, starting as early as preschool and kindergarten, puts students at risk for poor school performance and dropout, which in turn, puts them at risk for unhealthy behaviors as adolescents and young adults as well as poor long-term health outcomes

Among the social causes are mentioned ethnicity, poverty, environment of origin. Since 1979 Muller et al. presents the problem of poverty-related absenteeism at a primary school in Basel. They point out that in the lower income group children of full-time working mothers have the lowest average of school absences, while in the highest income group they have the highest average. School absences of children in the lower income group increase markedly with increasing learning problems which may point out class differences of schools. While exactly the opposite should happen, high quality education at all ages is the key for children from disadvantaged backgrounds or having parents with lower education to not abandon school (Vintila, Vintila, Petcovici, 2011).

Amalu and Abang (2015) study school absenteeism among primary school children. Their finding revealed that financial constraints, lack of interest, illnesses, pampering of family members, school location were the major causes of pupil absenteeism. It was recommended among others that parents and their children and / or wards should be counseled on the effect of absenteeism on school performance and its long-term consequences on national development.

D'Agostino et al (2018) show that fitness is associated with absenteeism, although this relationship may differ across poverty and gender subgroups. Fitness improvements may be more important to reduce absenteeism in high / very high poverty girls compared with low / mid poverty girls and both high / very high and low / mid poverty boys. Expanding school-based physical activity programs for youth particularly in high poverty neighborhoods may increase student attendance.

Midouhas (2017) examines school poverty effects on the trajectories of child behavior and the moderating roles of ethnicity and gender. Gender and ethnic background may influence how a child responds emotionally and behaviourally to the composition of peers at school. School poverty predicted internalizing and externalizing problems concurrently, and internalizing problems longitudinally. In poor schools, girls had a steeper inclined to internalizing problems, but made greater reductions in externalizing problems. Ethnic differences were also found in the association between school poverty and child adjustment

Morrissey, Hutchison and Winsler (2014) argue that low family income is associated with poor academic achievement among children. Higher rates of school absence and tardiness may be a mechanism through which low family income impacts children's academic success. Their study examines relationships between family income, as measured by receipt of free or reduced-price lunch, school attendance, and academic achievement among a diverse sample of children from kindergarten to 4th grade.

Keppens et al. (2019) tries to appreciate the accuracy of the data provided by schools regarding the absence of children. Their results revealed a weak association between self-reported unauthorized school absenteeism and registered unauthorized school absenteeism. Boys, students in technical and vocational tracks and students who speak a foreign language at home, with a less-educated mother and who receive a school allowance, received more registered unauthorized absences than they reported themselves. Additionally, pupils with school refusal and who were often authorized absent from school received more registered unauthorized absences compared to their self-reported unauthorized school absenteeism.

Among the causes of absenteeism is mentioned the mobility of the family. Thus Green, DeFosset and Kuo (2019) present the implications of mobility in school absenteeism. They argue that school connectedness is closely linked to academic success: students who are engaged at school have better attendance and academic performance, and are less likely to drop out. Residential mobility - having moved homes - can increase the risk of a negative academic trajectory (e.g., absenteeism and academic failure). While existing research has examined residential mobility among students and its connection to long-term consequences such as absenteeism and academic failure, less is known about how residential mobility relates to potential intermediate school experiences (eg, school disconnectedness, low perceived academic ability, and experiences with school violence and harassment) that contributes to a negative academic trajectory. The results highlight the value of developing and implementing strategies that can identify and support students who move at young ages, to prevent student disengagement and promote attendance and academic success early in their life trajectory.

Van Eck et al. (2017) establish how school climate relates to chronic absence. School climate may play an important role in influencing chronic absence rates among schools, yet little research has evaluated how school climate constructs relate to chronic absence. Using multilevel latent profile analysis, they evaluated how profiles of student perceptions of school climate at both the student and school level differentiated school – level chronic absence rates. Their results suggest that school climate shares an important relationship with chronic absence among adolescent students attending urban schools.

Regular school attendance is foundational to children's success but school absenteeism is a common, serious, and highly vexing problem. Researchers from various disciplines have produced a rich yet diverse literature for conceptualizing problematic absenteeism that has led to considerable confusion and lack of consensus on a pragmatic and coordinated assessment and intervention approach. Kearny si Graczyk (2014) propose a response to intervention model to promote school attendance and address school absenteeism.

The ways of combating absenteeism are very different.McConnell and Kubina (2014) propose connecting with the family to improve school attendance. School attendance is a rising issue in public schools. Students regularly absent from school may end up involved in destructive behaviors and dropout of school. Family characteristics are strong determining factors in students' school attendance. When parents or caregivers are regularly apprised of their child's attendance, they can provide appropriate feedback at home.

Sugrue, Zuel and Laliberte (2017) analyze the methods of intervention to prevent absenteeism. Chronic school absenteeism among elementary school – age students is gaining attention from researchers and policymakers because of its relationship to long-term negative educational outcomes. Current literature on effective interventions, however, is limited in terms of the number of studies that have found even marginally effective interventions, the lack of clarity on the interventions being studied, and the connection between the intervention studied and the factors contributing to poor attendance.

Objectives and Hypothesis

The main objective of the research was to make the children and the parents understand that the absences from the school have negative consequences on their preparation, with consequences that will be seen further in educational curricula.

The hypothesis from which the research started was that advising the children and the parents by the social worker, a reduction in the number of absences will be obtained.

Methodology

For data collection, the number of absences of children was recorded over a period of two months. After completion of the intervention, the number of absences over the same time period was recorded again and the results were compared. The obtained data were processed with SPSS 17.0.

For the intervention, counseling sessions were held with the children who had absences and once a week an intervention was made at the classroom level. The classroom intervention consisted of inviting people from different professions to tell the children about their profession and to arouse their interest in the respective field. The parents of the children with absentees were also advised by the social worker in a number of 5 sessions explaining to them the unfavorable consequences of the absenteeism on the level of knowledge of the children.

The studied lot

Two third classes from a general school in Arad were included in the research. One of the classes constituted the experimental class (EC), in which the intervention through counseling was done. The other class was the control class (CC) with the help of which we checked whether the results obtained are due to the intervention performed by the social worker.

We did not have children in the two classes with chronic somatic disorders that would justify the absences from the school for a longer period. The classes had an equal number of children: 23

Results and discussions

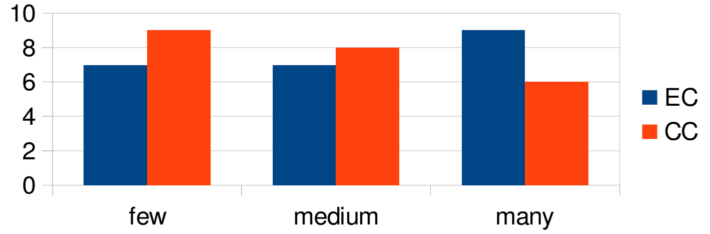
The number of absences of the children from the two classes was recorded over a period of 2 months. Absences were introduced in three categories: few - up to 1% of the total hours of the period concerned; averages - up to 5% of the total hours of the target period and many - between 5 and 10% of the study period.

The number of children according to the number of absences in the two classes in the initial phase can be observed in table 1 and figure 1.

Table 1. The number of children with absences and their frequency in the initial phase

Absence frequency	Exp. Class (EC)	Control class (CC)
few	7	9
Medium	7	6
Many	9	8

Figure 1. The number of children with absences and their frequency in the initial phase



It can be observed that the number of absences is approximately equal distributed to the two classes. The reason for the absences of the children was very different, ranging from "did not wake my grandmother" to various somatic accusations. Already at this age the children have understood that if they complain in the morning that something hurts (their head or belly usually) then the parents tell them to stay home and not go to school.

On the other hand, some of the absences are justified by the grandparents by: "let him to be absent now, as much as he can, because when he grows up, he can not be absent to the job." This attitude encourages children to miss school more often and to consider absences as something that is not particularly important. However, the results of longitudinal research presented in the literature show that absence from school has a significant effect on primary school attainments. In particular, it was found that an absence of half a year between the ages of 7- and 11-years-of-age resulted in a reduction of 0.7 of a year and 1 year in reading and mathematics test scores respectively (Carroll, 2010).

These consequences are usually not taken into account by parents or grandparents, when they propose to the children to stay home and miss school. Also, there are few parents who can request from the teacher the topics for the absence days and work with the children at home to recover the knowledge from the absent period. They are mainly based on the fact that the child will recover in class when he / she returns to school and do not think that the other children move on and there is no time in the class to recover the knowledge lost by one or the other children. The school syllabus has a certain order that must be respected in order to be able to complete all the volume of knowledge in the period of one year.

In the experimental class the counseling of children with absentees began. They were explained, at their level of understanding, what are the consequences of staying behind with the knowledge, how the deficiencies accumulate and ultimately will no longer meet the requirements of the program. At the class level, people from different professions were invited weekly: doctors, drivers, engineers, welders, hairdressers, etc. who told the children about their profession, about the satisfactions they offer and about the salary they can get. The children were interested in many professions but in particular the driver and the veterinarian (boys) and medical assistants (girls).

The parents were also included in a counseling program, consisting of 5 sessions in which they were presented with concrete, scientific data, the consequences of frequent absences from the children's school program.

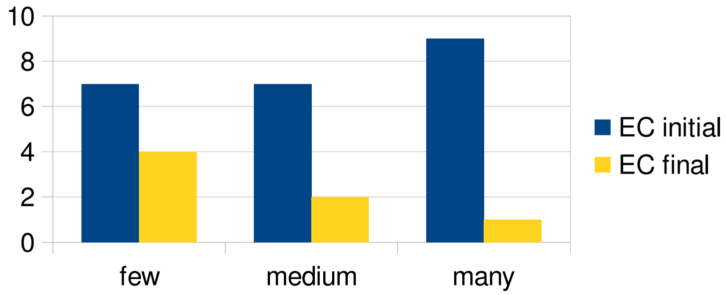
After a period of two months of intervention with children and parents, the number of absences of children was evaluated again. The obtained results are illustrated in table 2 and figure 2.

Table 2. The number of children with absences and their frequency in the final phase compared with the initial one in the experimental class

Absence frequency	EC Initial	EC Final
few	7	4
Medium	7	2
Many	9	1

The table shows a marked improvement in school attendance and a clear decrease in the number of absentees. Only 7 children from May 23 were absent: 4 had few absences, 2 had average absences and only one had a large number of absences

Figure 2. The number of children with absences and their frequency in the final phase compared with the initial one in the experimental class



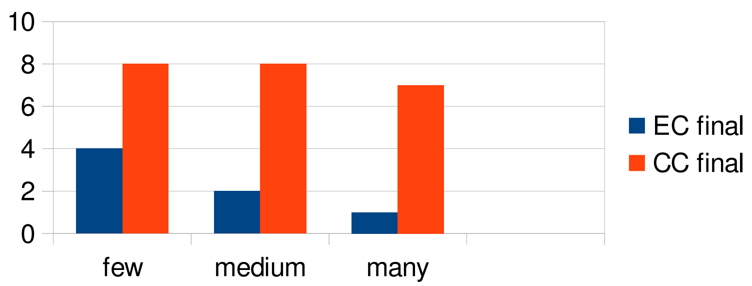
The child who still had a large number of absences had a special family situation - parents who went abroad to work and he was in the care of his grandparents. In addition, during the research, it was found that he had a lung problem, which he was absent enough.

The differences between the frequencies in the initial phase and those in the final phase are statistically significant at a significance threshold of $p <.02$. To see if these differences are due to the method we used in the intervention we will compare the final frequencies of the experimental class with those of the control class. Table 3 and figure 3 present this aspect.

Table 3. Number of children with absences and their frequency in the final phase compared between the two classes

Absence frequency	Exp. Class (EC)	Control class (CC)
few	4	8
Medium	2	8
Many	1	7

Figure 3. Number of children with absences and their frequency in the final phase compared between the two classes



It is easy to see that while in the control class the number of absences remains quite high, without differing too much from the initial phase, in the experimental class they have decreased significantly. This is proof that the method of counseling children and parents used in the intervention program has played an essential role in reducing the number of absences in the experimental class. Thus the starting hypothesis was validated in practice by the obtained results.

Conclusions:

Multiple absences from school with important consequences on the level and quality of children's knowledge. The social assistance counseling of children with absentees and their parents results in a decrease in the number of absentees of children, and the program introduced weekly in the class has increased the interest of the children for the school.

The involvement of the counseling team at school (social worker, psychologist) is necessary to help children avoid the negative consequences of absences on reading and math and, in general, on the quality of their knowledge. A particular care should be given to the language the professionals use in their counseling process, as using the field language in the interaction with the clients (parents) can lead to misunderstandings (Goian, 2012, Goian, 2010). In addition, parents should also be involved in raising awareness of the danger of numerous absences and cooperating with the counseling team to increase school attendance by children.

Researches of this kind must continue and be more numerous so that the best method of preventing absenteeism can be found. There will be no universally valid method, but it will be possible to choose from a range of methods the most suitable for reducing absenteeism and increasing school attendance

Acknowledgement: We hereby state that the subjects involved in our research were informed about the voluntary character of participation in this research, about the understanding of information and of that fact that withdrawal from research is possible at any time without negative consequences upon the participant. The research complied with all ethical research standards, the research participants/participants` guardians giving their consent to participate in the research.

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STUDENTS' UNREST: AN EVALUATION OF INFLUENCING FACTORS AND CONTROL IN TERTIARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract: *Incessant closure of schools for months in the wake of students' unrest has become a regular feature of tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. This study therefore sought to explore factors and control of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State. A descriptive method was adopted and data was collected via a survey of 750 respondents comprises of students, academic and non-academic staff in five tertiary educational institutions in Delta State. Data analysis was performed using percentages, means, correlation analysis and t-test. Findings indicated that increase in tuition fees, dissatisfaction over academic programmes, poor leadership and cult activities were the major factors influencing students unrest whilst effective communication, stable and moderate tuition fees, students' involvement in decision-making and effective leadership behaviour were perceived as the major control measures to curb students' unrest. Besides establishment of functional professional counseling units in all tertiary educational institutions in Delta State, involving students in decision-making particularly on issues that border on their welfare and academic programmes, it was also recommended that authorities of educational institutions should as much as possible observe transparency in their dealings with students, be proactive and listen to students' complaints.*

Keywords: *student, unrest, causes, control, tertiary educational institutions*

INTRODUCTION

Education is a distinctive way in which the society inducts its young ones into full membership. Education provides the platform for the acquisition of knowledge, skills, habits and values for productive living in the society (Yalokwu, 1992). As a result of this, education equips individuals with the personal capabilities for survival in and contribution to the societal development (Nwagwu, 2005; Akeusola, Viation & Asikhia, 2012). Globally, socio-economic and political developments are increasingly been driven by the advancement and application of knowledge (education). This explains why education in general and higher education in particular is germane to the growth and development of knowledge and economy (World Bank, 1999). Therefore, Nigerian tertiary educational institutions are established with the aim of given any student who enrolls a very sound and qualitative education, to be able to function effectively in any environment in which he/she may find him/herself; so as to become more productive, self-fulfilling and attain self-actualization (federal Government of Nigeria, 1981). Under the Nigerian Policy on Education of 1977, revised in 1981 and 2004, higher education aims at:

i. The acquisition, development and inculcation of the proper value – orientation for the survival of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their environment

ii. The development of the intellectual capacities of individuals to understand and appreciate their environment

iii. The acquisition of both physical and intellectual skills which will enable individuals to develop into useful members of the community and

iv. The acquisition of an objective view of the local and external environments (Federal Government of Nigeria, 1981 & 2004; Aluede, Jimoti, Agwinede & Omoregie, 2005).

Tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria are developed to achieve the above aims through: a.Teaching, b. Research and c. Dissemination of existing and new information (especially through publication); and service – fostering community service and professional training for the development of intermediate and high level manpower (Federal Government of Nigeria, 1981; Aluede *et al.,* 2005; Akeusola *et al.,* 2012; Odu, 2013). However, studies conducted by Akinade (1993), Aluede and Aluede (1999), Aluede (2000), Aluede *et al.* (2005) and Adeyemi (2009), Akeusola *et al.* (2012) and Oodu (2013) have sown that many of the Nigerian tertiary educational institutions are finding it difficult to achieved their aims because of the many problems confronting them. One of such is the problem of students' unrest. In recent times, students' unrest have come to be recognized as one of the most visible perennial problems of significance when compared with other social vices like cultism, examination malpractices and drug abuse (Aluede *et al.,* 2005).

Students' unrest is worrisome to parents, government and even the students themselves. In recent times, Nigeria higher education authorities cannot predict how long a semester or academic year could last depending on the frequency of students' unrest. In Nigeria today, students' unrest is a serious challenge. Therefore, the need to maintain crises free system provided the motivation for this study. It was also the aim of the study to explore factors and control of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State so as to proffer useful recommendations. There is no doubt that this study will provide database to authorities in tertiary educational institutions and policy makers on students' crises management. Finally, the study will provide a building block and therefore serve as a strong reference point for future researchers, academia, and students of management and social sciences who may deem it fit to carry out further studies on the subject matter.

Statement of the Problem

Students' unrests, revolts, protests, violence and closure of schools for months, expulsion of students from schools and destruction of lives and property among others have been a major issue of concern to institution authorities, parents and even student themselves. The incessant closure of schools in the wake of students' unrest have limited the ability of Nigerian tertiary educational institutions to give students a very sound and qualitative education which is a major reason for the establishment of higher institutions (Aluede *et al.,* 2005; Adeyemi, 2009; Akeusola *et al.,* 2012; Odu, 2013). Despite the measures taken over the years in curbing students unrest, the situation seems to be on the increase in recent times and makes this study apt. this is because the more that is known of students' unrest and its control, the better for the formulation of a realistic students crises management strategy that will help to achieve peace in higher institutions of learning and thus, contribute to the achievement of the aims of higher education as specified in the National Policy on Education. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the influencing actors and control of students unrest in tertiary education institutions in Delta State and provide a lasting solution to the prevalence of students' unrest in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions.

Research Questions

In the light of the above, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

i. What is the level of occurrence of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State?

ii. Is there difference between the opinion of female and male students on the causes of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State?

iii. Is there significant relationship between causes of students' unrest and control measures' used to curb students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State?

iv. Is there difference in the mean rating of students on control measures of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated for testing:

H_1: There is no significant difference between the occurrences of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State.

H2: There is no significant difference between the opinion of female and male students on the causes of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State.

H3: There is no significant relationship between causes of students' unrest and control measures' used to curb students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State.

H4: There is no significant difference between the mean ratings of students on control measures of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Every nation strives to improve its position in the Innovation Index and wants to evolve as the most innovative nation. It helps the country develop socially, politically, professionally and culturally. All nations have recognized that providing students with the right type and creative education can enhance their learning outcomes; improve their performance on the job and help them to become better citizens which ultimately will impact positively on the national development growth. The main aim of any educational institution is not just for their students to get good grades, but also to make students more innovative, creative and independent learners. The students are also being trained for their future professions even from the earliest days of their schooling. The current education reforms in education sector in Nigeria in the areas of planning, curriculum innovation and teacher education among others are control measures to revamp education industry to instill discipline in various institutions of learning. Federal Government of Nigeria have in one point or the other introduced free education scheme and bursary award for students of tertiary educational institutions in order to enhance equal educational opportunities. The efforts of government notwithstanding, there have been increase in students' unrest in most Nigerian tertiary educational institutions (Odu, 2013, Makinde, 2014).

Students' unrest according to Aluede *et al.* (2005) is known by different nomenclature such as students' revolt, protect, violence, crises, etc. According to Titilayo (2003), students' unrest is a form of protestation that results from the inability of students and those in management position to amicably resolve grievances or areas of disagreements. In such cases, students show their grievances on such issues that affect their general well-being in the campus. When the situation becomes unbearable to them, they resort to violence and subsequently move to the streets with placards rioting and vandalizing properties. In the view of Falua (2004), students' unrest is an unstable situation of misbehaviour, boycott of classes, disturbance, wanton destruction and the extreme danger that could be perpetrated by students. Akeusola *et al.* (2012) sees students' unrest or crises as a revolt and rampages by students to show their grievances or press their demands to their school authorities. Students' unrest can therefore be seen as a chaotic situation in which students are angry and consequently behave violently in their protest against certain institutions' decision.

In recent times, it has been observed that students' unrest in Nigeria tertiary educational institutions was precipitated by several factors such as increase in tuition fees, cultism, failure of institution authorities to listen to students' complaints and poor campus transformation system. Others include non-participation of students in decision-making, academic stress, changing value systems of students, contemporary national issues, absence of welfare amenities such as residential facilities for a sizeable number of students, government policies and actions, e.t.c. All these have constantly been issues that have largely dominated student protest actions in higher educational institutions across the country. It is very clear that students in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions now have values that are generationally at variance with those of the authorities who are in charge of the administration of the campuses. These students make demands that the socio-economic climate of the larger society cannot satisfy (Animba, 1993; Ajibade, 2013). However, as future leaders, students fail to realize that no meaningful development can take place in crises ridden system caused by militancy and rampage (Akeusola *et al.,* 2012, Ige, 2013).

The genesis of students' unrest or crises in Nigeria tertiary institutions dates back to 1944 when students protested against the British authorities' intension to build a military base in Lagos to help in the Second World War, and also when the king's college students clashed with the police in Lagos over hostel accommodation in March 1944. In 1962, there was another student crisis at University of Nigeria Nsukka over poor quality of food being given to students. In 1965, there was an inter-students crisis between the supporters of Prof. Eni Njoku and Prof. Saburi Biobaku over who should be the Vice Chancellor of University of Lagos. By the mid – 1960s and early 1970s, the form of protest changes from its peaceful, non violent and open confrontation with the school authorities and security agencies leading to destruction of lives and properties. In 1978, the introduction of tuition fees in all tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria led to the students' protest tagged "Ali Must Go". Also, in 1988, there was a nation-wide students' protest against increase in the prices of petroleum products. In 1998, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma protests against cult activities. In 2005, students at Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-Iwoye protested against the killing of students of OOU. College of Agricultural Science, Ayetoro also protested against the killing of student by the police, to mention but a few. Since then, students' unrest has grown to become a regular occurrence in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions.

Causes of Students' Unrest in Nigeria Tertiary Education Institutions

A cursory look at Nigerian tertiary educational institutions reveals that several factors precipitate students' unrest in recent times. These factors include:

i. **Cultism**: Cultism as one of the major causes of students' unrest is described as an assemblage of people who share unconventional ideas and beliefs, and involve themselves in eccentric conduct and manifestation mostly shrouded in secrecy; carry out secret cult activities and membership, organization, rules and mode of operation are supposed to be unknown and unknowable to non-member cult (Igodo, 2002; Odu, 2013). Infighting and internal wrangling by cultists led to the formation of spinster groups such as seadogs, buccaneer confraternity, the Vikings, the Black beret, the Daughters of Jezebel, among others (Egwu, 2003). Impulsive desires for supremacy are among the reasons behind cult clashes, murder, maiming, rape, acts of sickening and barbarism in our institutions of higher learning (Igodo, 2002). Cult menaces in our institutions of higher learning are gaining momentum daily taking more dangerous dimension and in fact, running a parallel government with the institutions authorities. However, measures targeted at stemming the menace of cultism in Nigeria tertiary educational institutions appear not yielding positive results (Omisade, 2014).

ii. **Leadership of the Institution**: Students' unrest does not occur without reason. It is an indicator that certain inadequacies exist in the administration of the institutions involved. The leaders of tertiary educational institutions may be insensitive to the students' problems and thus neglect their needs. This may give room for student's confrontation with school authorities which may end in crises. Loto (2000) noted that poor leadership style of the school authority has led to breakdown of law and order, disturbance of public peace, loss of lives, disruption of school administration, damage of school properties and truncation in academic programme.

iii. **Government Policy**: More often than not, some government policies may have direct or indirect adverse effect on the students' welfare. However, some policies may be proper but the students might misinterpret them and resolve to violence. This may involve many tertiary educational institutions simultaneously (Obi, 2014). One incident of students' unrest in 1960 was essentially due to students' dissatisfaction with government insensitivity to national issues, and its inability to address them appropriately. Universities of Obafemi Awolowo, Ile, Ife, Jos and Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta protested against the federal government in 1977 due to student dissatisfaction with newly introduced educational polices (Aluede *et al.,* 2005).

iv. **Communication Gap**: effective communication diffuses tension among students and authorities in the institution. Despite this fact, some authorities of tertiary educational institutions shut their administrative doors to students' complaints and grievances which may likely result to students registering some unacceptable social behaviour such as violent demonstration of 1981 at Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria leading to the death of a student and vice-Chancellor dismissed. Obi (2014) sees communication gap as lapse in the means of transferring ideas, opinions and views to the students. Therefore, communication breakdown can occur when the effective channels of communication are not in place.

v. **Students' participation in Decision-Making**: Students' demand for participatory in administration, especially on issues affecting their academic life are likely to continue and even be on the increase. Odu (2013) noted that when students are denied the opportunity of being part of policy making decision in related matters of their welfare, they feel subjected and dehumanized. Students believe they should have significant voice in determining some issues concerning their welfare. When they ask to be heard and refused being heard and when legitimate channels are closed there is bound to be crises. When students' body or representatives are excluded from participating in the deliberation on issues that significantly influence their educational objectives, a feeling of isolation and ostracism is created.

vi. **Religious Factor**: The religious factors cannot be left out of the causes of students' unrest in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions. In Nigeria today, the mode of dressing of many female students on campuses often causes disapproval. Some of their male counterpart especially Muslim fundamentalists may feel uncomfortable around them. For example, Bayaro University Kano had sometimes in 1993 witnessed total breakdown of law and order when some Muslim fundamentalists invaded a 'miss campus' competition organized by the students' union government (Titilayo, 2003).

vii. **Youthful Exuberance:** In Nigeria today, youthful exuberance especially the negative characteristics is another serious issues that spark off students' crises in our institutions of higher learning. Social irrelevances of youth behaviour, confrontation, victims of intellectual arrogance, emotional instability are characteristics of adolescents which when overstretched results to disastrous consequences such as riots and demonstration (Ufot, 1980, Odu, 2013). Peter and Okolie (1998) observe that majority of Nigerian students now are often exuberant, outspoken and radical in outlook, which have set out to challenge institutional authority and any attempt to correct them may create tension and consequently crises. Anadi (1993) noted that home background of students to some extent dictates the quality of students' behaviour at a stage in life. Students as products of the home, their behaviour reflect the nature of their homes. Some undesirable behaviour of students directly or indirectly leads to students' crises such as intimation, assault and insult, wanton destruction of property, participation in secret cults, drug offences, lesbianism and homosexualism (Ige & Olowolabi, 2010).

viii. **Other Factors:** Some other factors that may give room for students' unrest include inadequate teaching and learning facilities, poor accommodation; unwarranted rustication and expulsion; intimidation of students by some lectures; inadequacy of previous valued options , goals, and ends; poor funding of tertiary educational institutions; infrastructural collapse and social distortion; brain drain, ideological and political reasons; absence of employment opportunities; obvious inequalities, perverted sense of right and wrong in social affairs; declining economic condition; increase in the price of petroleum products (Aluede *et al.,* 2005; Adeyemi, 2009; Ajibade, 2013; Obi, 2014; Oludaya, Uche, Omonijo and Eche, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

In this study, Merton's Strain Theory Anomie propounded by Merton (1968) was adopted as the framework of analysis. According to Merton (1968), the real problem in the modern society is not created by a sudden social change, but rather by a social structure that holds out the same goals to all its members without giving them equal means to achieve them. It is this lack of integration between what the culture calls for and what the structure permits that causes the breakdown of the normative system. Merton, however, holds that there are certain goals which are strongly emphasized by society (i.e. acquisition of power or wealth and certain means (i.e. education, hard work, unlimited job opportunity, e.t.c.) were equally emphasized to reach the goals.

However, not everyone according to Merton has equal access to the legitimate means to attain those goals. Therefore, Merton (1968) present five ways in which individuals denied access to socially approved goals and means may adapt to the strain-conformity, innovation, ritualism, retreatism and rebellion. The conformist continues to accept both the goals as well as the prescribed means for achieving those goals. Individuals who adapt through innovation reject the means (hard work, etc.) and design alternative means or ways (burglary, fraud, embezzlement, robbery or host of other crimes) to attain the goals (power, wealth, e.t.c.) prescribed by society, which he/she continues to uphold/accept.

In ritualism, individual's abandon/reject the prescribed goals (power, wealth, etc.) emphasized by the society but continues to uphold the culturally prescribed means (hard work, etc.). Retreatism is the adaptation of people who give up both the goals (can't make it) and the means (why try?) and retreat into the world of alcoholism and drug addiction.

They have internalized the value of system and therefore under internal pressure not to innovate. The final adaptation, rebellion, occurs when the cultural goals and the legitimate means are rejected. Individuals create their own goals (i.e., get rid of establishment) and their own means (revolutionary activities, i.e., physical violence such as violent demonstration or riot).

Following from the above assumptions, the Merton's strain theory is apt and relevant for the appreciation of the frequent and prevalence of students' unrest in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions. However, students' unrest in Nigerian higher institutions can be hung on the fifth adaptation, which is rebellion.

The strong cultural emphasis on success goals in Nigeria is not matched by an equally approved means everyone is socialized to aspire towards high achievement and success.

These successes are expected to be achieved through legitimate educational and economic endeavours. However, it is obvious that the Nigerian economic and educational systems subject students to diverse strain and stress individually and as a group. For instance, many tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria lack basic amenities like functional laboratory, well equipped library, sports equipment and adequate hostel with functional facilities like water, light, etc., necessary for successful academic enterprises. Again, the spectre of unemployment, underemployment and inflation haunts many students in Nigeria. Under this condition, students are apt to question and challenge the legitimacy of the social, economic, political and institutional arrangement producing such inimical conditions (Ajibade, 2013).

METHODOLOGY

A descriptive method was adopted and data was collected via a survey of 750 respondents. The target population comprised three sampling frames made up of the five tertiary educational institutions. These consisted of a university (Delta State University, Abraka), two Polytechnics (Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku and Delta State Polytechnic, Ozoro) and two colleges of education (College of Education, Agbor and Federal College of Education (Tech) Asaba, Delta State).

The simple random sampling technique was considered most Apt for the study to target respondents with knowledge about the specific issues capture in the study. Out of the 750 copies of questionnaire administered, 608 were retrieved, giving us a response rate of 81.07%. Out of the 608 respondents, 366 were students and 242 were academic and non-academic staff.

Table I: Distribution of the Sample Size according to institutions

S/N	**Institutions**	**Students**		**Academic & Non Academic Staff**		**Total**
		Male	**Female**	**Male**	**Female**	
1	Delta State University, Abraka	48	28	24	25	125
2	Delta State Polytechnics, Ogwashi-Uku	38	41	25	23	127
3	Delta State Polytechnics, Ozoro	33	44	25	23	125
4	College of Education, Agbor	41	35	23	25	124
5	Federal College of Education (Tech.) Asaba	34	24	24	25	107
6	**Total**	**194**	**172**	**121**	**121**	**608**

Source: Fieldwork, 2018

The research instrument for the study was the structured questionnaire. This was a modified form of the instrument used by Adeyemi (2009), Akeusola *et al.* (2012) and Odu (2013). This was necessary to better address the new respondents in a different state/environment. The data collected were analyzed using percentages, means, correlation analysis and t-test while the hypotheses were tested at 0.05 levels of significance.

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 2: Perceive Causes of Students' Unrest in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Delta State

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	Cultism	86	14.1	14.1
2	Poor leadership	89	14.6	28.7
3	Communication gap	48	7.9	36.6
4	Youthful exuberance	19	3.1	39.7
5	Government policies and related issues	32	5.3	45.0
6	High handedness	15	2.5	47.5
7	Dissatisfaction over national issues	17	2.8	50.3
8	Unfulfilled needs	15	2.5	52.8
9	Religious factors	08	1.3	54.1
10	Dissatisfaction over academic programmes	106	17.4	71.5
11	Students welfare related causes	38	6.3	77.8
12	Staff Issues	12	2.0	79.8
13	Increase in tuition fees	123	20.2	100.0
	Total	**608**	**100.0**	

Source: From the Questionnaire Administered

In table 2, the results indicated that increase in tuition fees, dissatisfaction over academic programmes, poor leadership and cultism were the major causes of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State.

Table 3: Consequences of Students 'Unrest in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Delta State

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	Temporary closure of the institution	97	16.0	16.0
2	Boycott of lectures	92	15.1	31.1
3	Loss of lives	95	15.6	48.7
3	Disruption of school administration and truncation in academic programmes	123	20.2	66.9
4	Suspension and expulsion of students and students' ring leaders	99	16.3	83.2
5	Wanton destruction of school properties	102	16.8	100.0
	Total	**608**	**100.0**	

Source: From the Questionnaire Administered

In table 3, the disruption of school administration and truncation in academic programmes was the major consequence of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State as indicated by 123 respondents which constituted 20.2%. Other consequences given by the respondents include Wanton destruction of school properties (16.8%), suspension and expulsion of students and students' ring leaders (16.3%) temporary closure of the institution (16.0%), loss of lives (15.6%), and boycott of lectures (15.1%).

Table 4: Control Measures of Students' Unrest in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Delta State

S/N	Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1	Extra curriculum	24	4.0	4.0
2	Stable and moderate tuition fees	104	17.1	21.1
3	Effective communication	131	21.5	42.6
4	Effective leadership behaviour	81	13.3	55.9
5	Efficient teaching – learning facilities	29	4.8	60.7
6	Students' involvement in decision-making	96	15.8	76.5
7	Good governance and effective social security	24	4.0	80.5
8	Use of negotiation with students	28	4.6	85.1
9	Dialogue with parents and other stakeholders	24	4.0	89.1
10	Professional counseling	17	2.8	91.9
11	Cordial community relations	37	6.1	98.0
12	The use of security forces like police/army to maintain law and order in the affected institution	13	2.0	100.0
	Total	**608**	**100.0**	

Source: From the Questionnaire Administered

In table 4, the results indicated that effective communication, stable and moderate tuition fees, students' involvement in decision-making and effective leadership behaviour were perceived the respondents as the major control measure to curb students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State

Testing of Hypotheses

Hypothesis I

H_1: There is no significant difference between the occurrences of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State

Table 5: Occurrence of Students' Unrest in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Delta State

S/N	Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	$SD\bar{X}$	Cat. T	Crit. T
1	Delta State University, Abraka	125	4.05	0.58	0.68	2.92	1.96
2	Delta State Polytechnics, Ogwashi-Uku	127	3.93	0.61	0.23		
3	Delta State Polytechnics, Ozoro	125	3.48	0.43	0.39		
4	College of Education, Agbor	124	3.17	0.51	0.20		
	Federal College of Education (Tech.) Asaba	107	2.79	0.60	1.01		

$p < 0.05$
Source: Authors' Computation, 2018

In table 5, the test statistics show that calculated 't' (2.92) is greater than the critical 't' (1.96). The null hypothesis is therefore rejected. This means that there was a significantly difference in the occurrence of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State.

Hypothesis 2

H_2: There is no significant difference between the opinion of female and male students on the causes of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State

Table 6: Opinion of Female and Male Students on the Causes of Students' Unrest in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Delta State

S/N	**Variables**	**Group**	**N**	$\bar{X}$	**SD**	$SD\bar{X}$	**Cat. T**	**Crit. T**
1	Cultism	Female	172	4.03	0.51	0.05	1.43	1.92
		Male	194	4.01	0.58	41		
2	Poor leadership	Female	172	4.00	0.52	0.02	1.42	1.97
		Male	194	3.01	0.56	36		
3	Communication gap	Female	172	3.06	0.50	0.002	1.45	1.99
		Male	194	3.03	0.53	24		

4	Youth exuberance	Female	172	3.02	0.50	0.01	1.51	1.92
		Male	194	3.04	0.58	55		
5	Government policies and related issues	Female	172	3.00	0.54	0.01	1.55	1.97
		Male	194	2.91	0.52	36		
6	High handedness	Female	172	2.83	0.56	0.01	1.58	1.97
		Male	194	2.81	0.56	30		
7	Dissatisfaction over national issues	Female	172	2.66	0.52	0.01	1.63	1.92
		Male	194	2.58	0.51	22		
8	Unfulfilled needs	Female	172	2.64	0.50	0.001	1.63	1.97
		Male	194	2.56	0.51	39		
9	Religious factors	Female	172	2.81	0.57	0.01	1.64	1.96
		Male	194	2.50	0.55	34		
10	Dissatisfaction over academic programme	Female	172	2.48	0.50	0.01	1.66	1.97
		Male	194	2.54	0.53	56		
11	Students welfare related causes	Female	172	2.71	0.50	0.01	1.71	1.97
		Male	194	2.47	0.55	39		
12	Staff issues	Female	172	2.11	0.54	0.001	1.76	1.92
		Male	194	2.34	0.52	22		
13	Increase in tuition fees	Female	172	2.96	0.51	0.01	1.82	1.97
		Male	194	1.59	0.53	26		

< 0. 05
Source: Authors' Computation, 2018

According to the results presented in table 6 above, all calculated 't' (1.43, 1.42, 1.45, 1.51, 1.55, 1.58, 1.63, 1.64, 1.66, 1.71, 1.76 and 1.82) are less than the critical 't' (1.92). The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This means that female and male students perception do not differ in their expression on the causes of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State.

Hypothesis 3

H_3: There is no significant relationship between causes of students' unrest and control measures used to curb students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State

Table 7: Correlation between Causes and Control of Students' Unrest in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Delta State

Variables		**Causes**	**Control**
Causes	Pearson correlation	1	.857**
	Sig (2 – tailed		.000
	N	608	608
Control	Pearson correlation	.857**	1
	Sig (2 – tailed	.000	
	N	608	608

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 – tailed).
Source: Authors' Computation, 2018

Table 7 above shows the correlation between causes and control of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State. There exist a significant positive high correlation between causes and control measure ($r = .887$, $n = 608$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that the causes of students' unrest and the control method taken are highly related for all the tertiary education institutions in Delta State. Therefore, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between the causes and control measures to curb students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State is rejected. This is widely supported by the previous findings of Aluede (2000); Viatonu and Jegede (2007); Akeusola *et al.* (2012).

Hypothesis 4

H_4: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of students on control measures of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State

Table 8: Difference in the Mean Rating of Students on Control Measures of Students' Unrest in Tertiary Educational Institutions in Delta State

S/N	**Variables**	**Group**	**N**	$\bar{X}$	**SD**	**SD**$\bar{X}$	**Cat. T**	**Crit. T**

1	Delta State University, Abraka	Female	172	4.05	0.59	0.01	1.42	1.97
		Male	194	4.01	0.56	0.15		
2	Delta State Polytechnics, Ogwashi-Uku	Female	172	4.06	0.56	0.18	1.44	1.96
		Male	194	4.03	0.52	1.34		
3	Delta State Polytechnics, Ozoro	Female	172	3.74	0.50	0.01	1.53	1.97
		Male	194	3.48	0.51	39		
4	College of Education, Agbor	Female	172	2.59	0.58	0.001	1.50	1.92
		Male	194	2.60	0.59	0.14		
5	Federal College of Education, Asaba	Female	172	2.98	0.46	058	1.58	1.97
		Male	194	2.84	0.55	36		

$p < 0.05$
Source: Authors' Computation, 2018

According to the results presented in table 8 above, the calculated 't' values (1.42, 1.44, 1.53, 1.50, and 1.58) are less than the critical 't' value (1.97). The null hypothesis is therefore accepted. This means that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of students on control measure of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions of Delta State. This is supported by the previous findings of Odu (2013).

Discussion of Findings

Factors that could influence students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions were examined and findings revealed that all the factors influence students' unrest. They are cultism, poor leadership communication gap, youthful exuberance, government policies and related issues, unfulfilled needs, religious factors, dissatisfaction over academic programmes, students welfare related issues, staff issues and increase in tuition fees. This is in agreement with the views of previous researchers such as Aluede (200 & 2001); Adeyemi (2009); Akeusola *et al*. (2012); Odu (2013) and Obi (2014). The study revealed that female and male student's perception do not differ in their expression on the causes of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions. This finding substantially supports those of Aluede (2000) and Odu (2013).

Adeyemi's (2009) and Odu's (2013) findings are also in support of some of the findings of the current study. Effective communication, stable and moderate tuition fees, students' involvement in decision-making and effective leadership behaviour are the major control measures necessary for curbing students' unrest. This is in partial agreement with the views of previous researchers. Onyenoru

(1996); Onwurati (2000); Alabi, Akanbi and Owoade (2002); Aluede *et al.* (2005) and Obi (2014) for instance, found that efforts at managing students' unrest by the concerned authorities (government and institutions with an ultimatum instructing students to vacate their halls of residence and premises, suspension or dissolution of students' unions and their executives. And when the crises have a national impact, the government often reacts by proscribing the students' union organization at the national level. Other control measures mentioned by theses scholars include rustication or outright expulsion of student rig leaders and the use of security forces like the police and army to maintain law and order in the affected institutions.

The study also revealed that the causes of students' unrest and the control measures taken are highly related for both the state and federal tertiary educational institutions in Delta State. This finding agreed with those of earlier researchers (Akeusola *et al.*, 2012).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the causes and control of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State. Students' unrest is not issues that can be handled with levity as the outcome of such crises have not been in the interest of the institutions, the parents; the students themselves even the society at large. There is no doubt that students unrest in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions often disrupt and threatening the stability of these institutions and the country's economy at large. The causes and consequences of students' unrest have been highlighted. Based on findings, the study conclude that increase in tuition fees, dissatisfaction over academic programmes, poor leadership and cultism are the major causes of students' unrest in tertiary educational institutions in Delta State. The study also conclude that effective communication, stable and moderate tuition fees, students' involvement in decision-making especially on matters affecting their academic life and effective leadership are the most basic control measures and prevention of students' unrest. Based on the empirical and theoretical findings of this study, the following recommendations were made.

i. Efforts should be made to bridge the communication gap between school authorities and students. This will help to bring the incidents of students' unrest in Nigerian tertiary educational institutions to the barest minimum.

ii. Students should be involved in decision-making particularly on issues that border on their welfare and academic programmes.

iii. Authorities of educational institutions should as much as possible observe transparency in their dealings with students, be proactive and listen to students' complaints.

iv. School authorities should set up welfare committee to seek out students' problems or challenges. This will guarantee good and adequate support services for majority of the students.

v. The use of police and other law enforcement agents to scuttle disperses and breaks students crises had led to the killing and maiming of many students. And rather than helped to mitigate the problem of students' crises, such measure had only further aggravated the phenomenon. Therefore, it is suggested that government and authorities of institutions should avoid using police and other law enforcement agents as a control measure in curbing students' unrest. This is because it often calls for the use of extra – ordinary measure, including force to restore law and order.

vi. Government should intensify efforts in the provision of necessary facilities and equipment to enhance effective teaching-learning activities.

vii. School authorities should establish functional professional counseling units to help students understand the consequences of students' unrest on campus.

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IMPACT OF MENTORSHIP ON STUDENTS' ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN, BENIN CITY

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Abstract: *Mentorship has been long recognized in Europe, America and other developed countries as a very useful technique for improving on and in enriching the experiences, skills, knowledge and expertise of employees in organizations, including academic institutions. However, it is only recently that its usefulness is being realized in tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria. Mentorship and students' academic excellence has been subjects of discourse among social scientists from a wide range of disciplines in the last two decades. But unfortunately, very insufficient number of studies in this area has been conducted in Nigeria. This study was undertaken to fill this obvious research gap. A descriptive method was adopted and data was collected via a survey of 300 respondents using accidental sampling technique. Data collected were tested and analyzed using descriptive, frequency distribution, correlation and linear regression analysis. The result of the study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between mentorship and academic excellence. The result also revealed that mentorship does have a significant impact on academic excellence in University of Benin. Thus, the study recommends among others that Nigerian universities should give due attention to mentorship since mentoring has been recognized as a strategic technique for building and sustaining scholars in research universities that provide advanced education for the academic profession, policy makers and public and private sector professionals involved in the complex globalized economies of the 21st century.*

Keywords: Mentorship; Academic Excellence; Mentee .

1. INTRODUCTION

Mentorship is a learning relationship concept. It is a relationship in which the more experienced, knowledgeable and trusted person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person and the process involved is referred to as mentoring. Mentoring is a learning relationship which is broader than that involved in coaching. The latter is definitely skills or competency focused, whereas the former is concerned with passing on knowledge, insight and attitudes as well as skills to less experienced person (Cole, 2002). Mentoring has also been considered a personal enhancement strategy through which one person facilitates the development of another by sharing known resources, ideas, learning, expertise, values, skills, perspectives, attitudes, and proficiencies and professional competence. It is also a "strategic technique for building and sustaining scholars in research universities that provide advanced education for the academic profession, policy makers and public and private sector professionals involved in the complex globalized economies of the 21st century" (Peretomode & Ikoya, 2019:21).

While mentorship may not be a panacea to academic excellence, Altbach and Salmi, 2011 cited in Peretomode and Ikoya (2019 believe that it is one sure road to achieving academic excellence, obtaining high scores and improving on the intellectual capacity of an individual or mentee. For instance, in making a world class research university, Altbach and Salmi (2011) expressed the view that the modern university is the ideal space for the ecosystem of scholars to search for new ideas in a spirit of free inquiry and mentorship plays a significant role in this.

Therefore, mentoring as a special social support helps students and amateur researchers and less experienced and less knowledgeable staff to develop into more confident, self-directed independent learners and researchers (Jekielek & Moore,2002). While mentorship or mentoring has been long recognized in Europe, America and other developed countries as a very useful technique for improving on and in enriching the experiences, skills, knowledge and expertise of employees in organizations, including academic institution, only recently that its usefulness is being realized in tertiary educational institutions in Nigeria and a very insufficient number of studies in this area has been conducted in Nigeria. This study therefore examines the impact of mentorship on students' academic excellence in University of Benin, Benin City.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Mentorship or Mentoring

Mentorship is most often described as a guiding relationship in which a more experienced person, the mentor, assumes a supportive role by overseeing and encouraging reflection and learning with a less experienced person, the mentee (Gazza & Shellenberger, 2005). Wikipedia, 2017 cited in Peretomode and Ikoya (2019:18) defines mentorship as "a learning and development partnership between someone with vast or in-depth experience and knowledge (the mentor) and someone who wants to learn, build skills and knowledge while attaining his goals.

The person who wants to learn could be a male (mentee) or a female (protégé)". The goal of a mentorship relationship is to provide an environment of support and to advise and coach an individual within the context of the culture and expectations of the organization or institution (Angelique, Kyle & Taylor, 2002). It also help the less experienced persons to learn new skills that will position them to be successful in their academic career (Waddell, Martin, Schwind & Lapum, 2016).

The expression 'mentor' originates from Greek mythology, where Ulysses (Odysseus), before leaving for the Trojan wars, entrusts his son, Telemachus, to the care and direction of his old and trusted friend, mentor. Thus, a mentor has come to mean someone mature and experienced who advises (and gives practical assistance where required) to a younger and less experienced person (Cole, 2002). Since then, the term has evolved and the practice has become acceptable and popular. Mentoring as a special form of social support is mainly found in three different areas: (i) workplace mentoring, (ii) youth mentoring, and (iii) mentoring in higher education (Allen & Eby, 2007). Although, there is no consistent definition of mentoring (Crisp & Cruz, 2009), in higher education, mentoring programs mostly show positive effects for mentee (e.g., better academic performance, as well as for mentor (e.g., more satisfaction) and the institution itself (e.g., reduced drop-out rates) (crisp & Cruz, 2009).

Mentoring according to Armstrong (2009), is the process of using specially selected and trained individuals to provide guidance, pragmatic advise and continuing support that will help the person or persons allocated to them to learn and develop. Mentors prepare individuals to perform better in the future and groom them for higher and greater career advancement. Mentoring in the words of Katamei and Omwono (2015) is where one or more teachers, tutors, coaches or mentors work on a regular, one-to-one or small group basis with students. It is essential to note that the student/mentor relationship may be a powerful influence in a student's life, particularly for those students who are vulnerable for a range of reasons outside the mentoring relationship. Mentoring of students by teachers (lecturers) and adults is crucial for their academic excellence. In addition, Peretomode and Ikoya (2019) affirm that mentoring is more than just giving advice on how to work more effectively or handle a specific problem. It involves the mentor taking personal interest in seeing that a mentee developed the right talent, skills, values, attitudes, expertise and knowledge needed to succeed, to have a successful career and contribute as much as possible to the organization, society and the nation.

Mentoring relationships are categorized into two, namely, formal and informal mentorship. A formal mentorship is one in which the mentor/mentee relationship is organizationally structure. The management of the organization is "responsible for deliberately selecting and pairing the mentee and the mentor with the goal of assisting the mentee grow and develop specific competencies. In an informal mentorship, on the other hand, it is the mentee or protégé who requires training that selects the mentor-the person with more expertise, experience, knowledge and advice he/she wants to share with or under study" (Murray, 2001:13). Mentoring programs have two important features, i.e., communication and support (Ismail & Ridzuan, 2012). In the context of university mentoring program, communication is generally defined as mentors openly delivering information about the procedures, content, tasks and objectives of the mentoring programs, conducting discussions about tasks that should be learned, giving detailed explanations about the benefits of attending mentoring programs and providing performance feedback. While support on the other hand, is defined as providing emotional support (i.e., acquire new knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and guide them to properly apply in daily life) and instrumental support (i.e., assist mentees to adapt to campus environment) at varying times (Fox *et al.*, 2010). Mentoring relationships are therefore characterized by providing two dimensions of mentoring functions for mentees, i.e., career-related functions (e.g., coaching) and psychosocial functions (e.g., role modeling) (Leidenfrost *et al.,* 2014). The figure 1.1 shows a list of the most effective features of mentors as well as partners.

2.2 Qualities of a Good Mentor

A mentor is an experienced or knowledgeable person who coach, advise and encourage less experienced person or persons. For a mentor to achieve his/her goals he/she must possess certain key qualities. Thirteen major qualities are identified in the literature (Demers, 2014; Lovett, 2018; Peretomode & Ikoya, 2019) as shown below:

(i) Ability and willingness to clearly communicate his/her values, skills, knowledge and expertise.

(ii) Be prepared always for each mentoring session.

(iii) Be prepared to show faith in his mentee's abilities and willingness to learn.

(iv) Should be available, approachable, flexible, and be an active listener.

(v) Should be trusted, honest, candid and straightforward whenever the mentee asks questions.

(vi) Should provide guidance and constructive feedback to the mentee or protégé.

(vii) Always be ready to follow up to find the answers to questions asked by his mentee that he does not know.

(viii) Should be able to allow the partnership to focus on the needs of the mentee.

(ix) Should be able to celebrate the mentee whenever he achieves a task.

(x) Be objective and fair in the mentor mentee relationship.

(xi) Should be able to show genuine compassion.

(xii) Should be willing to step out of his/her comfort zone and be dedicated to others' successes.

(xiii) There should be high degree of openness, there should be no hidden agenda or ulterior motives involved in the relationship.

2.3 Mentorship Techniques: Strengths and Challenges

i. Traditional Mentorship: The traditional mentorship models are more common in the academic environment (Angeloque *et al.,* 2002). Traditional mentoring describes a one-to-one, unidirectional, asymmetrical relationship in which a junior or less experienced person is paired with a more experienced person who provides guidance and support (Blackwell, 19898). There are limitations to the traditional didactic model and the literature suggests a need for innovative, more effective models that address the needs of less experienced person within the contexts of contemporary academic institutions (Darwin & Palmer, 2009). While the traditional mentorship model provides less experienced person with support and coaching with a more experienced person, this relationship can propagate a dynamic of power. The mentor is generally the one in control of the mentor/mentee relationship, and as such, the power dynamic can have the potential to be exploitative (Angelique *et al.,* 2002). This type of mentorship also limits less experience person to single point of view (Waddell *et al.,* 2016). Darwin and Palmer (2009) add that to be successful in today's academic environment, one must have access to various mentors, perspectives and insights.

ii. Peer Mentorship: To address the potential drawbacks of a traditional dyadic mentorship relationship, alternative forms of mentoring have emerged. Peer mentoring is a form of mentorship in which members with equal ranks and similar level responsibility developed supportive networks to improve the effectiveness of one or the other (PEretomode & Ikoya, 2019). Peer mentorship can occur within dyads where one peer has slightly more experience than the other member of the dyad (Beane-Katner, 2014). By pairing individuals with those of the same experience, rank and hierarchal level within the institution, new members have an opportunity to meet others in the same situation as themselves, thereby fostering a sense of inclusiveness and well-being. Peer mentorship has the potential to create a more equitable environment, and drawing on commonalities, participants have the opportunity to be more empathetic (Angelique *et al.,* 2002). However, Angelique and colleagues caution that a peer mentorship model has the potential for competitiveness amongst peers.

iii. Mutual Mentorship: A variant of a dyadic peer mentorship approach is mutual mentoring. Mutual mentoring is a form of mentorship that provides members with the opportunity to mentor one another directly (Beane-katner, 2014). It is a relationship where neither party is designated 'mentor'. Each is a confident and a resource to the other. Each serves as a sounding board for ideas and a reality check for plans (Peretomode & Ikoya, 2019). Beane-katner (2014) suggests that both peer and mutual mentorship can occur in groups where members with similar characteristics and experiences establish networks that serve to build a sense of community and shared understanding of the faculty role.

iv. Circle Mentorship: Circle mentorship model draws its strengths form the peer and mutual mentorship models. It is an innovative model that fosters mentorship relationships and typically involves more experienced person or faculty facilitator(s) serving in the role of mentor with a group of few less experienced persons or new faculty peers. A mentorship circle approach, based on the premise that individuals learn in relationships, offers flexibility, diversity, and knowledge creation be exposing the mentees to various perspectives, including those of the mentees themselves (Darwin & Palmer, 2009; Waddell *et al.,* 2016). Mentorship circle model allowed mentees to establish and maintain supportive and collegial relationship with others, which fosters a sense of community and collaboration. The mentorship circle promotes a learning environment in which mentees shared their experiences, listened carefully without judgment, asked clarifying questions, and offered thoughtful feedback to each other (Waddell *et al.,* 2016).

2.4 Academic Excellence

Academic excellence is "A ubiquitous and an elusive quality as the world beauty. It is used in many different ways that it can almost be meaningless but one thing is clear, like beauty, if you see one you recognize it" (Peretomode & Ikoya, 2019:20). Excellence can be seen as a hooray word' (Whyte, 2005), an 'idealized cultural construct' (Meyer & Rowan, 1977) or a 'Macro-cultural myth' (Hallett, 2010). It has been widely used to refer to various aspects of universities' activities. Such myths are particularly important in institutions where success depends on legitimacy acquired from conformity to macro-cultural myths (Hallett, 2010).

McGrath *et al. (* 2015) defined students' academic excellence as progress or distance travelled in their knowledge, skills and personal development. According to the self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985), humans naturally strive for progress and therefore progress in studying is conceptually more accurate representation of learning than achievement perse. In addition, (sufresno.edu (2017) defines academic excellence as the demonstrated ability to perform, achieve and//or excel in scholastic activities. Academic excellence has been identified with achieving high grades and superior performance. But academic excellence is more than just making good grades. It is the maximum development of your intellectual capacities and skills in service to humanity.

2.5 Mentorship and Academic Excellence

Excellence is defined as the quality of excelling greatness, value and worth. According to BBC English Dictionary (1993:379), excellence is "the quality of being extremely good at something." Excellence, including academic excellence is never an accident. As Rodriquez, 2015 cited in Peretomode and Ikoya (2019:22) noted, "It is the result of high intention, sincere effort, intelligent direction and skillful execution". Mentorship or mentoring is vital in achieving academic excellence because it helps students to proactively navigate learning in higher education by role-modeling effective study habits, offering supportive and collaborative environments for good teaching, learning, research, innovation and extension services. Mentoring is surely an effective way of passing on experience and developing the neophyte and even the old who may wish to develop skills and expertise in certain specific areas (Peretomode & Ikoya, 2019). Jekielek and Moore (2002) conducted a study on mentoring as a promising strategy for youth development and they affirmed that because academic achievement is a key predictor of socio-economic status, many mentoring programs have led to improving the academic and cognitive skills and experiences of young people and other learners. The work of Crisp and Cruz (2009) shown that mentoring enhances academic excellence and there is a positive relationship between proper mentoring and high academic achievement at all levels of education including tertiary education level. Overall, youth participating in mentoring relationship experience positive academic returns through better attendance, better chance of going on to higher education, better attitudes toward school and it improves grades (Jekielel & Moores, 2002). They concluded that young people who perceived high quality relationship with their mentors experienced the best results.

Further, results of a number of empirical/quantitative studies have shown that mentorship significantly and positively affected and improved the academic performance, experience and productivity of students and thus enhanced academic excellence (Shcker & Palmer, 1993; Campbell & Campbell, 1997; Nagba *et al.,* 1998; Thompson & Kelly, 2001; Bland, Yayloor & Shollen, 2009; Bordes- Edgar, Aredondo, Kurpius & Rund, 2011; Cho, Ramanan & Feldman, 2011; Fleming, Burnham & Huskins, 2012; Karanja & Gukingu, 2014; Pfund, 2016). More specifically, Campbell and Campbell's quantitative study showed that mentored students obtained better academic achievement than those who did not participate in the mentoring program. Also, Bordes-Edgar *et al.*, found that mentoring improve, directly or indirectly GPA and persistence of college students. Similarly, Thompson and Kelly found that mentored boys made significantly higher academic gains than non-mentored boys.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

While there are several theories and models which might prove appropriate for a discourse of this nature, the action-reflection model and the theory of andragogy present us with a heuristic tool for interrogating the central issues of the study. The action-reflection model is a humanistic and dialetic model developed by Handal and Lauvas (1983). Drawing from the action-reflection model, the focus of mentorship is on helping the mentee or protégé become better at understanding the theory behind the practice of mentoring and the goal is to create awareness about core values, experience and knowledge that direct our action. It is not surprising therefore that the term practice theory' is an important term in the action reflection mode. The model emphasizes planned, formalized mentor-mentee conferences rather than formal mentoring (Peretomode & Ikoya, 2019). The model is builds on four mentoring outcome pillars: orientation to the faculty role, socialization to the academic community, development of teaching, research and service skills, and facilitation of growth of future leaders (Nick *et al.*, 2012). The theory of andragogy on the other hand considers mentorship as the "art and science of helping adults learn" (Merriam, 2001:5). The theory argues that "the task of the mentor is to facilitate learning, create an educational program and setting in which adult students can develop their talent and self- directed learning" (Brookfield, 1986:92). These authors believe that as the mentee or protégé is helped to learn, he/she will grow to continue self-directed learning-learning without the mentor-to imbibe the values, the right attitude, skills, acquire the relevant knowledge, experiences and become more effective in society (Peretomode & Ikoya, 2019). All these positive qualities can bring about achieving set goals of academic excellence. In the final analysis, the relevance of the action- reflection model and the theory of andragogy is based on their ability to justify how mentorship helped to enhance academic excellence

In line with the literature review, the following objectives and hypotheses were formulated for the study;

i. To examine the relationship between mentorship and students' academic excellence?

ii. To evaluate the impact of mentorship on students' academic excellence?

Hypotheses of the Study

H^1: There is no significant relationship between mentorship and students' academic excellence.

H^2: Mentorship does not have a significant impact on students' academic excellence.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the survey research design to determine the impact of mentorship on students' academic excellence in the Faculty of Education, University of Benin, Benin City. Data was collected via a survey of 300 students using accidental sampling technique. The research instrument of the study was the structured questionnaire. This was a modified form of the research instrument used by Campbell and Campbell (1997); Bordes-Edgar *et al.* (2011) and kendricks, Nedunuri and Arment (2013). This was necessary to better address the new respondents in a different environment. Participants were given up to one week to complete and return the questionnaires. All participants were guaranteed anonymity, confidentiality and freedom to withdraw from the study at any stage. Out of the 300 copies of questionnaire administered, 263 were retrieved and analyzed giving us a response rate of 87.7%. Out of the 263 respondents, 145 were female students and 118 were male students. The items of measurement were rated on 5-point likert type scale which ranks responses on a scale of (i) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree. Data collected were tested and analyzed using descriptive, frequency distribution, correlation and linear regression analysis with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21. A pilot study to determine the level of reliability was carried out on 50 students who were part of the study within a time interval of two weeks. Cronbach Alpha method was used to establish the internal consistency of the instrument as shown in the table below.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics of Variable

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Mentorship	10	0.723
Academic excellence	3	0.769

The results yield a coefficient of 0.723 and 0.769, which satisfied the general recommended level of 0.70 for the research indicators (Cronbach, 1951). Also, the questionnaire was validated by experts in management sciences. Hence, researchers' satisfied both reliability and validity of the scale.

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 **Sample Profile**

Table 2 shows the respondents' demographic characteristics. The majority of the respondents were female 145(55.1%). Male respondents were 118, consisting 44.9%. Age group of 27-32 years which comprised of 95 (36.1%) accounted for majority of the respondents. Most respondents representing 245 (93.2%) are single. 99 (37.6%) comprises of second year students accounted for major of the respondents and students achieving CGPA between 2.40-3.49 also being the majority amongst the respondents consists of 39.2%.

Table 2: Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

S/N	Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage %
1	Gender of Respondents	Male	118	44.9
		Female	145	55.1
		Total	**263**	**100.0**
2	Age of Respondents	15-20years	38	14.4
		21-26years	71	27.0
		27-32years	95	36.1
		Above 32 years	59	22.5
		Total	**263**	**100.0**
3	Marital Status of Respondents	Single	245	93.2
		Married	13	4.9
		Divorced	2	0.8
		Widowed	3	1.1
		Total	**263**	**100.0**
4	Current year of Study of Respondents	First year	41	15.6
		Second year	99	37.6
		Third year	56	21.3
		Fourth year	67	25.5
		Total	**263**	**100.0**
5	Academic Achievement of	CGPA of 1.00-1.49	17	6.5

	Respondents	CGPA of 1.50-2.39	54	20.5
		CGPA of 2.40-3.49	103	39.2
		CGPA of 3.50-4.49	76	28.9
		CGPA of 4.50-5.00	13	4.9
		Total	**263**	**100.0**

Source: Researchers' fieldwork, 2019

4.2 Analysis of Constructs

Table 3 shows the correlation between mentorship and students' academic excellence in the Faculty of Education, university of Benin, Benin City. There exists a significant positive high correlation between mentorship and students' academic excellence (r=.912, n=263, p<0.01). this implies that mentorship has a strong and positive relationship with students' academic excellence. This is widely supported by the previous findings of Campbell and Campbell (1997); Thompson and Kelly (2001); Pfund (2016).

Variables		**Mentorship**	**Students' Academic excellence**
Mentorship	Pearson correlation Sig. (e-tailed) N	1	.912** .000 263
Students' academic excellence	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.912** .000 263	1 263

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2-tailed)

4.3 Effectiveness of Mentorship on Academic Excellence

Table 4&5 shows the results of students' perception of faculty mentorship or mentoring. A likert scale of 1-strongly disagree to 5-strongly agree was used to evaluate students' perception of faculty mentorship. The mean scores were above 4.0 for all the items which indicated positive experiences towards faculty mentorship. Overall, mentor support scores ranged from a minimum of 2 to a maximum of 5. The average mentor support score for students was 4.28 (SD=0.76). The average mentor support score for students satisfaction was 4.71 (SD =0.62). It indicated that the students were satisfied with faculty mentorship.

Table 4 Survey Results of Students' Perception of Faculty Mentorship/Mentoring

Survey Item (Scale 1-strongly Disagree to 5-strongly agreed)	$\bar{X}$	**SD**	**Min**	**Max**	**Percentage favourable***
My faculty mentor showed genuine concern for me and treated me with respect	4.52	0.83	2	5	72.7
My faculty mentor helped minimize my anxieties about course work	4.43	0.83	2	5	72.7
My faculty mentor provided guidance about my educational problem	4.40	0.67	2	5	70.8
My faculty mentor advised me about my degree progress	4.38	0.63	2	5	93.1
My faculty mentor provided adequate support to facilitate my learning	4.33	0.63	2	5	88.4
My faculty mentor provided constructive feedback throughout the semester	4.30	0.72	2	5	84.3
My faculty mentor provided information about internship opportunities	4.21	0.81	2	5	66.9
My faculty mentor provided information about research opportunities	4.13	0.95	2	5	81.8
My faculty mentor provided information about professional development workshops	4.06	0.82	2	5	87.6
My faculty mentor was available when I needed him/her	4.03	0.66	2	5	68.7
Average score for all 263 respondents	4.28	0.76	2	5	78.6

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2019

Table 5 Survey Results of Students' Satisfaction with Faculty Mentorship or Mentoring

Survey Item					
(scale 1-very Dissatisfied to 5-very Satisfied)	$\bar{x}$	**SD**	**Min**	**Max**	**Percentage favourable ***
How satisfied interactions?	4.69	0.68	2	5	88.5
How would you rate your overall experience with your mentor?	4.73	0.56	2	5	81.7
Average score for all the 263 respondents	471	0.62	2	5	85.1

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2019

4.4 Comparism of Self-Perceived Mentor-Mentee/Protégé Relationship of Male and Female Students

Using the respondents subjective self-assessment of their perceived mentor-mentee/protégé relationship, the results reported in table 6 shows that both the male and female students perception do not differ in their expression on mentor-mentee/protégé relationship. Therefore, there is no statistically significant difference between the male and female students perception on mentor-mentee/protégé relationship at the 0.05 level as in indicated in table 6

Table 6: Comparism of Self- Perceived Mentor-Mentee/Protégé

Variables	**Frequency**	**Mean**	**SD**	**F**	**Sig.**
Male students	118	4.03	0.87	0.513	0.548
Female students	145	4.06	0.87		
Total	**263**	**4.045**	**0.87**		

Source: Authors' fieldwork, 2019

4.5 Linear Regression Analysis

In table 7 & 8, the simple linear regression shows (R^2) value of 0.683 which reveals that mentorship/mentoring independently account for 68.3% of the variation in students' academic excellence in the Faculty of Education, university of Benin, Benin City. The F. Statistics of 374. 218 revealed that the model is statistically significant at 0.05 significant levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 7: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R^2	Adj-R^2	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.856	0.683	0.649	0.345

a. **Predictors:** (Constant), mentorship
b. **Dependent variable:** Students' academic excellence

Table 8: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Square	Df	Mean	F	Sig.	Remark
1	Regression	18.573	2	6.378	374.218	.000[b]	Sig
	Residual	9.614	259	0.826			
	Total	**28.187**	261				

a. **Dependent variable:** Students' academic excellence
b. **Predictors:** (Constant), mentorship

5. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The results amongst others showed that mentorship have strong and positive correlation with students' academic excellence. This is in agreement with the previous studies. Campbell and Campbell (1997); Thompson and Kelly (2001); Cho *et al.* (2011); Karanja and Gukingu (2014); Pfund (2016) found that mentorship/mentoring program has a positive relationship with students' academic excellence. The findings is in agreement with Crisp and Cruz's (2009) views that mentorship enhances academic excellence and there is a positive relationship between proper mentoring and high academic achievement at all levels of education including tertiary education level. The findings also support the views of Jekielek and moore (2002) that many mentoring programs have led to improving the academic and cognitive skills and experiences of young people and other learners. It is, therefore not surprising that Jekielek and Moore (2002;1) expressed the view that "interest in mentoring is at all times high".

Also, based on the results of the statistical analysis, mentorship has significantly explained 68.3% of variation in students' academic excellence. Therefore, the study have shown that mentorship significantly and positively affected and improved the academic performance, experience and productivity of students and thus enhanced academic excellence. This findings is in agreement with Thompson and Kelly (2001); Bland *et al.* (2009); Cho *et al.* (2011); Bordes-Edgar *et al.* 2011); Fleming *et al.* 2012); Karanja and Gukingu (2014); Pfund (2016) that mentorship has a strong influence on students' academic excellence.

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Mentorship is an essential concept and technique because it helps young people overcome the barriers and risk factors in achieving successful academic outcomes. It is no doubt a very promising technique for achieving students' academic excellence at all levels of education including tertiary education level. Therefore, it is worth mentioning that mentor/mentee relationship is based on personal dynamics and should not involve evaluation. Once evaluation is considered, the dynamic of the relationship changes from a free-flowing, transparent and confidential relationship to a guarded power-driven relationship where the focus is on outcomes and impact. Evaluation occurs in students/supervisor relationships and in faculty/supervisor relationships. These settings may be valuable to promote career development but do have elements of conflicts of interest. The study have revealed through its perceived findings that mentorship has a positive impact on students' academic excellence and the benefits of mentorship are such that it is worth investing time, effort and money at all levels of education. Arising from the foregoing, we beg to make the following recommendations:

i. Nigerian universities should give due attention to mentorship since mentoring has been recognized as a strategic technique for building and sustaining scholars in research universities that provide advanced education for the academic profession, policy makers and public and private sector professional involved in the complex globalized economic of the 21st century.

ii. Mentor/mentee relationship should focus on the needs of the students. This is because caring and supportive relationship increases self-confidence, academic achievement and positive attitudes towards assisting others.

iii. Faculty mentors in Nigerian universities should be available, approachable, flexible, honest, candid and straightforward, be an active listener and always provide constructive feedback to their mentees. This is because students tend to be more successful academically when placed in supportive environments.

iv. Nigerian universities should intensify efforts in providing supportive programs, especially mentoring programs focusing on supporting first-year students. This is because mentoring foster students' academic and lifelong personal success.

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WORK PLACE PERFORMANCE OF UNIVERSITY TECHNOLOGY AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION (TVET) STUDENT-TEACHERS: A TRACER STUDY

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Abstract: *The research was a tracer study on work place performance of University Technology Vocational Education (TVET) Student–Teachers. Four research questions guided the study. The study adopted survey design, and the population was 45 involving Principals, Vice principals, Deans of Studies and Heads of the Department of technical subjects in 9 secondary schools in Anambra State where Technology and Vocational Education Student – Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University were posted for Teaching Practice during the 2018/2019 academic session. No sampling was done in the study because the population was small. The instrument for data collection was 40 items questionnaire developed by the researcher on a 5 point response scale. Descriptive statistics of mean and Standard Deviation were employed in data analysis. The findings revealed that University TVET Student-Teachers performed to a High Extent in lesson planning, lesson presentation, classroom management and evaluation of learning outcomes. Based on the findings it was recommended among others that Universities should be ensure that lecturers responsible for teaching educational measurement and evaluation course are kept abreast with the modern trend in skill evaluation.*

Key words: *Workplace; Performance; TVET; Tracer-Study; University.*

INTRODUCTION

Technology and vocational education is an educational programme designed to help the learners acquire and develop skills, knowledge and attributes for effective employment or progression in specific occupations. This type of education is given to individuals to enable them develop their creative and manipulative potentials for the benefit of humanity. Technology Vocational Education and Training (TVET) is an education that familiarizes its learners with practical knowledge related to a specific trade, occupation or vocation (Kukoyi, 2009). This demands that learners be adequately informed, prepared and equipped for the task ahead. In order to meet the manpower needs of the work place, the graduates have to possess the right attitude and abilities to do the work in line with the demands of the occupation. Onah and Okolo (2010) believed that the more informed young people are about the needed work, the more they are able to maintain themselves in an occupation which best meets their individual aptitude and interest. University is one of the several media for the actualization of TVET.

Technology and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) programme as obtained in the university has dual aims of training teachers of Technology/Vocational subjected and workers for different types of industries. Considering the dynamic nature of the society due to the innovations and globalization issues, Onah and Okolo (2010) opined that there is no automatic employment for Technology and Vocational Educational graduates in the schools hence they scout for and get employed in different positions in various firms. Chukwugbo and Okwuanaso (2014) had expressed fears that TVET graduates in the near future, may not fit properly into modern industrial establishments due to technological changes, consequently, Technology and Vocational Education Programmes has been undergoing revisions (Auta, 2017) leading to inculcation of new skills and competencies into the graduates.

Technology and Vocational Education courses as obtained in the universities are structured in a manner that there is a separation between Technology/Vocational courses and Education courses. These courses are expected to exposed graduates to ‘applied’ as opposed to ‘academic’, practical as opposed to theory and skill as opposed to knowledge to enable them perform effectively and efficiently in the workplace. Workplace performance of graduates to a large extent determines the functionality and viability of a school programme.

In Nnamdi Azikiwe University for instance, the department of Technology and Vocational Education has two major divisions - Business Education and Technical Education. Business Education have three options namely; Commerce and Cooperative, Accounting and Office Technology and Management while Technical Education have the following options three options: Building Technology, Woodwork technology, Electrical and Electronics Technology, Mechanical/Automobile Technology (Information Handbook of Standard Academic Programmes for Department of Vocational Education, NAU, Awka, 2015). The students choose the option they want to specialize in the course of their four years of study. The students are also mandated to go for industrial training to expose them to real life situations so as to become practically oriented before graduation. Resources are also available for students to practice and acquire skills necessary to their study and work upon graduation. It is believed that when students have completed their four years study in the University Technical and Vocational Education Department, they will perform efficiently in their workplace upon graduation.

In spite of several efforts by government through her different policies to make Nigeria educational system more functional, there are still growing concerns among education stakeholders and industrialists that graduates from our educational institutions might lack adequate practical background and relevant job related skills for performers in industries (Ideh, 2013; Idris& Rajuddin, 2012). Employers of labour have continued to express their worry over the quality of the current graduate of TVET institutions in Nigeria partly due to their lack of relevant job skills for performance in industries (Oviawe, Uwameiye & Uddin, 2017). According to the Shittu, Yakubu and Wala (2017), this situation calls for the enhancement of technical and vocational skills training programmes that institutions provide across the country.

Ovaiwe and Uwameiye (2010) had earlier reported that TVE institutions lack the tools and equipment necessary for practical education. The title equipment workshops and laboratories are often obsolete, bearing little or no resemblance to the current technologies used by the contemporary age workplace. In most cases, insufficient training resources lead to students overcrowding during classes, with most of them only observing the teacher demonstrate and not having opportunity to get hand on practice. The effect of these problems when not addressed is that the country will in the near future be grappling with abundant of educated graduates but unskilled workforce. When put in a question form: what is the situation with University Technology and Vocational Education programme Student–Teachers in their respective places of Teaching practice?

Research Questions

What is the level of performance of University Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers relative to:

1. Lesson planning?
2. Lesson presentation?
3. Classroom management?
4. Evaluation of learning outcomes?

METHOD

The study adopted descriptive survey research design. This study was carried out in Anambra State. The population for the study is 45, this comprises of Principals, Vice Principal academics, Vice Principal administration and Deans of studies and Heads of the Department of Technical subjects in the 9 Public secondary schools in Anambra State where TVE Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University were posted for Teaching Practice during the 2018/2019 session. There was no Sampling, the entire population was studied.

The instrument for data collection was 40 items structured response questionnaire developed by the researcher in line with the research questions. The questionnaire contained two sections A and B sections. Section A comprises of information on personal data of the respondents while section B comprises of responses from the respondents to answer the research questions. The questionnaire items were formulated based on five point response scale type. The response modes was a five point response rating scale using real limits of numbers, thus; Very High

Extent (VH), High Extent (H), Moderately High Extent (MH), Low Extent (L) and Very Low Extent (VL). These response category were assigned numerical values of 4.50 - 5.00, 3.50 - 4.49, 2.50 - 3.49, 1.50 - 2.49 and 1.00 - 1.49 respectively. The respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with the items represented.

The questionnaire was validated by one lecturer of Measurement and Evaluation in the department of Educational Foundation and two lecturers in Technology and Vocational Education both in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was determined using Cronbach's Alpha Formula to measure the internal consistency of the instrument and indicate the degree of consistency. This method of reliability estimate was used because the items are polytomously scored. Consequently, data was generated by collation of administered questionnaire to 10 Principals, Vice Principals, Deans of Studies and Heads of Technical subjects in Public secondary schools in Enugu State which is outside the area of study. The reliability coefficient obtained was 0.77. The instrument is therefore considered reliable since the reliability coefficient is high enough.

The researcher administered the questionnaire personally to the forty-five Principals, Vice-principals and Deans of study in secondary schools where Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University were posted for Teaching practice. The copies of the questionnaire was collected after the completion, 42 copies were returned by the respondents, representing 93% rate of return and were used for data analysis.

The responses was organized in tables according to the research questions and mean score was used to analyze the data in accordance with the real limit of numbers presented below:

Response	**Real Limit of Numbers**		
Very High Extent	(VH)	=	4.50 - 5.00
High Extent	(H)	=	3.50 - 4.49
Moderately High Extent	(MH)	=	2.50 - 3.49
Low Extent	(L)	=	1.50 - 2.49
Very Low Extent	(VL)	=	1.00 - 1.49

RESULTS

Research Question One

What is the level of performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in lesson planning?

Table 1:
Showing result on the level of performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in lesson planning.

S/N	Lesson planning	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
1	Preparing well-detailed lesson plan.	4.88	0.35	Very High Extent
2	Setting specific measurable objectives.	4.54	0.48	Very High Extent
3	Putting the characteristics of the students in perspective.	3.69	1.14	High Extent
4	Anchoring/basing the lesson on a relevant entry behaviour	4.33	1.55	High Extent
5	Developing lesson plans that promote acquisition of practical skills.	4.00	1.23	High Extent
6	Developing lesson plans that promote acquisition of scientific attitudes.	3.14	0.92	Moderate High Extent
7	Selecting appropriate instructional materials.	4.23	1.43	High Extent
	Cluster Mean	4.12		High Extent

Based on the result in table 1, the cluster means score of 4.12 shows that on the whole, the principals, vice-principals and deans of studies rated the performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in lesson planning to a high extent. The standard deviation scores were within the same range showing that the respondents were not wide apart in their ratings.

Research Question Two

What is the level of performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in lesson presentation?

Table 2:
Showing result on the level of performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in lesson presentation.

S/N	Lesson presentation	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
8	Considering the student's characteristics during lesson presentation.	4.23	1.46	High Extent
9	Encouraging students' participation during lesson presentation.	4.66	0.52	Very High Extent
10	Being well-skilled in arousing and sustaining students interest in the lesson.	4.16	0.67	High Extent
11	Facilitating student-to-student interaction.	3.28	1.19	Moderate High Extent
12	Facilitating student-teacher interaction.	4.19	1.56	High Extent
13	Giving students assignments that are relevant to the objectives of the lesson.	4.54	0.48	Very High Extent
14	Giving excellent feedback to students when asked questions.	4.42	0.48	High Extent
15	Displaying enough self-confidence during lesson presentation.	4.64	0.32	Very High Extent

16	Demonstrating mastery of knowledge of subject matter.	4.07	1.72	High Extent
17	Making proper use of the board while teaching.	4.38	0.39	High Extent
18	Communicating the subject matter clearly before the students.	3.90	1.63	High Extent
19	Reviewing the lesson after completion	3.90	1.09	High Extent
20	Having good understanding of individual differences among the students.	3.38	1.48	Moderate High Extent
21	Effective management of chalkboard.	3.69	0.87	High Extent
22	Explaining the lesson clearly and in ways to understand, offers alternative explanations or additional examples, and clears up confusion.	4.11	0.65	High Extent
23	Using examples from daily life situations while teaching.	3.45	0.92	Moderate High Extent
	Cluster Mean	4.06		High Extent

Based on the result in Table 2, the cluster means score of 4.06 shows that on the whole, the principals, vice-principals and deans of studies rated the performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in lesson presentation to a high extent. The standard deviation scores were within the same range showing that the respondents were not wide apart in their ratings.

Research Question Three

How efficient are Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in classroom management?

Table 3:
Showing result on the level of efficiency of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in classroom management.

S/N	Classroom management	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
24	Making classroom rules.	3.19	1.24	Moderate High Extent
25	Exhibiting clearly support safe and respectful behaviour.	3.95	0.68	High Extent
26	Paying attention to social dynamics of their classroom.	2.95	0.72	Moderate High Extent
27	Nurturing positive relationships with their students.	4.00	1.56	High Extent
28	Being sensitive to individual differences in preferred learning styles by varying the rate of the instruction given.	3.83	0.39	High Extent
29	Being sensitive to individual differences in preferred learning styles by varying the amount of the instruction given.	3.28	0.64	Moderate High Extent
30	Creating safe environment for students' participation.	3.73	1.57	High Extent
31	Making learning more fun and enjoyable.	4.23	1.78	High Extent
32	Praising students' good behavior/performance.	4.33	0.43	High Extent
33	Enforcing penalties for poor behavior.	3.88	0.66	High Extent
34	Ensuring cleanliness of the classroom environment.	3.78	1.46	High Extent
	Cluster Mean	3.74		High Extent

Based on the result in table 3, the cluster means score of 3.74 shows that on the whole, the principals, vice-principals and deans of studies rated the efficiency of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in classroom management to a high extent. The standard deviation scores were within the same range showing that the respondents were not wide apart in their ratings.

Research Question Four

What is the level of performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in evaluation of learning outcomes?

Table 4:

Showing result on the level of performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in evaluation of learning outcomes.

S/N	Evaluation	$\bar{X}$	SD	Decision
35	Giving students' standard question that prepared them for external examinations.	4.47	0.56	High Extent
36	Correct use of marking scheme.	4.11	0.88	High Extent
37	Ensuring that the questions set are relevant to specific objective of the lesson.	4.59	1.81	Very High Extent
38	Communicating students' performance to their parents.	3.23	0.69	Moderate High Extent
39	Administering various types of evaluation to motivate the students to learn.	3.30	1.72	Moderate High Extent
40	Considering the three domains of learning in their assessment of learning outcomes.	4.11	0.63	High Extent
	Cluster Mean	3.86		High Extent

Based on the result in table 4, the cluster means score of 3.86 shows that on the whole, the principals, vice-principals and deans of studies rated the performance of Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers of Nnamdi Azikiwe University in evaluation of learning outcomes to a high extent. The standard deviation scores were within the same range showing that the respondents were not wide apart in their ratings.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the research findings, it is seen that the school managers (principals, vice principals, deans of studies, and heads of department of technical subjects) rated the Nnamdi Azikiwe University Technology and Vocational Education Student-Teachers performance in lesson planning as adequate. Data in Table 1 revealed that NAU TVE Student-Teachers in this aspect. The findings were in agreement with Okafor's (2011) assertion that TVE is concerned with the production of graduates who can plan program of courses and learning experiences that begins with exploration of career options, supports basic academic and life skills, to enable achievement of high academic standards and prepare students for industry-defined work. Furthermore, Hattie (2009) upheld that lesson planning is the indispensable foundation on which to build effective instruction. More so, the findings confirm the views Seyi (2014) that TVE teachers must have adequate lesson planning knowledge to sequence the lesson in an engaging and meaningful manner for effective delivery in TVE classroom, laboratory or workshop.

Also, the findings of this study revealed that school managers in public secondary schools where NAU TVE student-teachers were deployed for Teaching Practice considered the performance of NAU TVE Student-Teachers in lesson presentation to be adequate, see tale 2. The findings confirms Idialu (2013) views that the TVE teacher communicates in a way that is both comprehensible and interesting to the students, else their learning will be greatly reduced. More so, the findings agree with the assertion of Akombi (2015) that one of the most important aspects of lesson presentation is shaping both content and style to fit the students. The findings however disagreed with the views of Oviawe, Uwameiye and Uddin (2017) that the products of Nigerian TVE institutions lack practical skills, attitudes, understanding, knowledge and competence required to achieve the goal on marketable labour force in the country.

The study also revealed that the school managers rated the efficiency of NAU TVE Student-Teachers in classroom management as adequate. Data in Table 3 indicated that NAU TVE student-teachers were adequate in managing their classes well. This agrees with the statement made by Oliver, Wehby and Reschly (2011) that classroom management plays a crucial role in creating an environment conducive to learning. In achieving the instructional objectives of the lesson, classroom management is an essential driver that encourages and supports learning. Hattie (2009) revealed that, classroom management and effective instruction are interdependent; you cannot have one without the other. Hattie maintained that the best planned lesson is worthless if interesting delivery procedures, along with good classroom management techniques, are not in evidence.

The study indicated that the school managers rated NAU TVE student-teachers adequate in evaluation of learning outcomes. Data in table 4 showed that NAU TVE student-teachers were efficient in the aspect of evaluating learning outcomes. This finding agrees with the view of Hills (2008) that evaluation of learning outcomes improve students' learning and help teachers in teaching. Gillis and Griffin (2008) maintained that evaluations integral to teaching. Similarly, Mukhtar and Ahmad (2014) held the view that this evaluation is indeed important to TVE programme which supports the national economic transformation agenda in churning out skilled and trained manpower.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, technology and vocational education in Nigeria is the pivot of any national development. Technology and vocational education is a means of providing for the workforce needed in both industriesand institutions. This is being done with the hope of improving the standard of living of the Nigerian citizen. It is when the individual in the micro setting are self-reliant that the macro economy becomes buoyant and stable. It will be an impossible task to plan and develop any economy in which technology and vocational education is not developed. With these obvious necessities, the need to invest in TVE by the Nigerian governments (federal, state and local) cannot be over-emphasized. Hence in the national transformation agenda, no progress will be made without adequate and enabling environment created for a paradigm shift from the transitional emphasis on rhetoric knowledge to the more modern and holistic TVE delivery system. Technology and vocational education should be treated as an integral part of overall educational planning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Universities should ensure that more pedapogical courses aredeveloped for the teacher training programme.
2. Universities should ensure that Lecturers responsible for teaching educational measurement and evaluation courses are kept abreast with the modern trend in skill evaluation.
3. School managers should ensure that Technical Student- Teachers are assigned to teach only subjects such as Basic Technology, Technical drawing and their field of specialization.
4. Adequate monitoring and supervision of Teaching Practice programme should be intensified.

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THE IMPACT OF THE TIME SPENT ON SOCIAL NETWORKS ON EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN ADOLESCENTS

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Abstract: *This study aims at identifying the level of emotional intelligence in pupils, to determine correlations between these psychological characteristics and the time spending in social networks, as well as to identify differences between female and male adolescents, regarding the level of their emotional intelligence. The research sample consisted of 200 pupils (123 female and 77 male adolescents), aged 15 to 19 years, studying in Romanian school institutions. In order to test the hypothesis, the following instruments were used: a. Test for Emotional Intelligence (adapted by Mihaela Roco after Reuven Bar-On and Daniel Goleman), b. a questionnaire designed to identify the time spending by pupils to use the social networks (developed for research purposes). The Emotional Intelligence Test consists of 10 items that provide for four situations in which the person can be found. The completion of the test is aimed, on the one hand, at ensuring the individual's transposition as much as possible, and on the other, choosing one of the four possible answers' variants, which are some concrete ways to react in the situations indicated by questions. The data analysis and obtained results highlights the existence of statistically significant negative correlations between the time spent by students on accessing social networks and the level of emotional intelligence. The statistical analysis also highlights the existence of a statistically significant difference between female and male adolescents at the level of emotional intelligence. The findings obtained constitute a support for the initiation of an intervention program for the personal development of adolescents.*

Key words: emotional intelligence; social networking; pupils; gender; adolescents.

1. Theoretical framework

The concept of emotional intelligence, first defined by Salovey and Mayer in 1990, has a broad history, starting in 1920, when Thorndike describes, besides academic intelligence, a type of social intelligence. He was followed by Weschler, who among the elements of intelligence also identifies certain personal, affective, and social factors. Maslow also discovers the emotional side as being very important in organizing relationships, pointing out that we cannot discuss motivation without emotions. However, the emotional concept was put aside because of the resistance of those who supported the uniqueness of the IQ in establishing the level of intelligence.

The psychometric vision of intelligence was eliminated along with Gardner's theories that argued that intelligence is not one-dimensional, but multidimensional. Numerous researches on emotional intelligence have been carried out since the 1990s. Salovey and Mayer structure emotional intelligence on three levels: the cognitive level (the ability to perceive and transmit emotions), the emotional level (the ability to develop feelings when they promote thinking) and the regulating level (the ability to identify and know emotions, and adjusting them for the best emotional and intellectual development). Through this structure the two tried to comprise the correlation between emotional and cognitive.

Bar-On defines emotional intelligence as a hierarchy of "noncognitive abilities, competencies and skills, which influences a person's ability to cope with environmental demands and pressures. The emotional attribute is used to underline the idea that this specific type of intelligence differs from cognitive intelligence" (Bar On,1997, p. 52).

Starting from the observation that for some people success in life is much easier and most of the time it is not due to intellectual abilities, Bar-On conducts numerous researches and structures emotional intelligence as a result of the following factors:

-intrapersonal factors (awareness of one's emotions, optimism/assertiveness, respect and consideration for one's own person, self-realisation, independence);

-interpersonal factors (empathy, mutually positive interpersonal relationships, social responsibility);

-adaptability (problem solving, reality testing, flexibility);

-stress control (tolerance to frustration, impulse control);

-general disposition (satisfaction, happiness, optimism) (Bar-On, R., Parker, J. D. A., 2012)

However, the concept of emotional intelligence is linked to the name of Daniel Goleman, who published *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* in 1995, which includes numerous studies on the brain, emotions and behaviour, thus opening up further research in the field. Goleman believes that emotional intelligence involves a combination of: awareness of one's affections, emotions, motivation; self-control of one's feelings, empathy, and sociability at the same time (Goleman, D., 2001,2004)

Adolescence, classified as the stage between the ages of 15 and 24, is an extremely challenging sequence in the evolution of the human individual. Currently, accessing social networks is increasingly taking place in adolescents' lives, estimates showing that it is between 6 and 8 hours per day (APA Reports).

According to expert studies, the use of social networks by adolescents as main consumers illustrates both a positive and a negative impact on this age group. Thus, the frequent use of social networks can lead to changes in lifestyle, time management, disturbance of attention, increase anxiety level (Muduli, JR, 2014) incite violence, threats, and criminal activity (Patton, DU, Eschmann, RD, Elsaesser, C., & Bocanegra, E., 2016). Longitudinal studies have highlighted the existence of a link between access to technology during childhood and pre-adolescence, and the development of addictions in adolescence (Xuanhui, L., Gonggu, Y.,2001).

Adolescence involves many changes, and access to social networks can be a refuge for young people, the place where they feel understood, accepted, where they can be seen by others as they wish, they can hide behind images, they can easily distort reality, but at the same time they feel comfortable, which will determine the desire to stay as connected as possible. On the other hand, being involved in a social network can put "pressure" on the activity within the network, the need to be "online".

On the other hand, there are studies that argue that the effect of using social networks contributes to improving adolescents' thinking and creativity, facilitates social interconnection (Muduli, JR 2014), streamlines intervention in crisis situations (Patton, DU, Eschmann, RD, Elsaesser, C., & Bocanegra, E. 2016), contributes to the development of empathy (Vossen, HGM, & Valkenburg, PM 2016), to the easy information transmitting in multiple fields, including socio-professional ones, which directly concern adolescents, and, last but not least, it facilitates solving school or interest tasks by activating various applications.

Regarding gender differences in emotional intelligence, most studies illustrate that female gender has higher levels of emotional intelligence than male gender (Joseph, D. L., Newman, D. A. 2010, Joshi, D., Dutta, I. 2014, Katyal,S., Awasthi, E., 2005, Patel, S. K. 2017, Ranasinghe, P., Wathurapatha, W. S., Mathangasinghe, Y., Ponnamperuma, G. 2017).

However, there are studies that identify a higher level of emotional intelligence in male subjects (Zohrevand, R. 2010), but also studies that do not identify any gender differences in the direction of emotional intelligence (Aquino, A. E. 2003, Brown, R. F., Schutte, N. S. 2006)

2. Research design

The study is focused on adolescents of 14 to 19 years old, who learn in schools from Caraş - Severin, Timiş, Hunedoara and Mehedinţi counties.

2.1 Research objectives

The proposed objectives refer to:

1. Identification of a relation between the emotional intelligence at adolescents and the time assigned by them in order to use socialization networks;
2. Identification of some differences between the emotional intelligence level at female gender adolescents, respectively male gender adolescents.

2.2 Research hypothesis

Hypothesis no. 1 We suppose that there is a negative correlation, significant from statistic point of view, between the time assigned by adolescents for the use of socialization networks and their emotional intelligence;

Hypothesis no. 2 We suppose that female gender adolescents have a more significant higher emotional intelligence level than the male gender adolescents;

2.3 Research methodology

The paper considers also a study related to the observation of eventual differences between female gender and male gender adolescents, regarding the emotional intelligence level, as well as the identification of a relation between the time assigned by adolescents for the use of socialization networks and their emotional intelligence.

The sample used in this research is composed by 200 adolescents, pupils of schools from Timiş, Caraş, Mehedinţi and Hunedoara counties. In this sample, we can identify 77 male gender adolescents, representing 38,5%, and 123 female gender adolescents, representing 61,5%. Regarding the repartition on ages at the level of the sample, information is presented as it follows:

- 4 adolescents of 14 years old, 2%
- 12 adolescents of 15 years old, 6%
- 41 adolescents of 16 years old, 20,5%
- 49 adolescents of 17 years old, 24,5%
- 41 adolescents of 18 years old, 20,5%
- 53 adolescents of 19 years old, 26,5%

Frequencies, depending on the gender and age level, within the sample implied in this study, are indicated in the table 1, respectively table 2.

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	26	26.0	26.0	26.0
	female	74	74.0	74.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	
Valid	I^{st} level	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
	II^{nd} level	50	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100,0

Table no. 1 The frequences of the sample depending on the gender

		I like to work with pupils				Total
		1	2	3	4	
Gender	Male	5	0	15	6	26
	female	25	26	23	0	74
Total		30	26	38	6	100
the level of studies	Ist level	0	11	33	6	50
	IInd level	30	15	5	0	50
Total		30	26	38	6	100

Table no.2 The components of the test sample in relation to age (frequencies and percentages)

In order to verify the stated hypothesis we applied the evaluation questionnaire for emotional intelligence adapted by Mihaela Roco after Bar-On and Goleman, and a questionnaire that we have conceived in order to identify the time assigned by pupils for the use of socialization networks, subjects' age and gender.

Regarding the evaluation questionnaire for emotional intelligence, the applying instructions target the check off of the answer which fits best by the adolescents, for each individual item. The quotation possibility of answers is performed according to the following data:

		I think that the didactic profession is important from social point of view				Total
		1	2	3		
gender	Male	5	9	12		26
	female	26	47	1		74
Total		31	56	13		100
the level of studies	Ist level	10	28	12		50
	IInd level	21	28	1		50
Total		31	56	13		100

Table no. 3 The values of the correlation coefficient

Regarding the second hypothesis of the herein study, the T test for independent samples confirms the fact that there is a significant difference from statistic point of view between the female gender adolescents and the male gender ones, at the level of the emotional intelligence. Statistic information is presented in the tables 4 and 5. The average of the female gender adolescents group, regarding the variable - emotional intelligence- (M = 88,25, SD = 23,617) is bigger (t = 2.75) than the one of the male gender adolescents group (M = 79,81, SD = 19,423), fact that indicates a significant difference from statistic point of view.

		I think I have the necessary qualities for being a good teacher					Total
		2	3	4	5	6	
gender	Male	2	7	1	15	1	26
	female	0	0	49	24	1	74
Total		2	7	50	39	2	100
the level of studies	Ist level	0	0	9	39	2	50
	IInd level	2	7	41	0	0	50
Total		2	7	50	39	2	100

Table no. 4 Statistical data concerning the calculation of the t test for independant samples

		I would have a stable job					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
gender	Male	10	0	10	3	3	26
	female	26	16	32	0	0	74
Total		36	16	42	3	3	100
the level of studies	Ist level	0	2	42	3	3	50
	IInd level	36	14	0	0	0	50
Total		36	16	42	3	3	100

Table no. 5 Statistical data SPSS

Conclusions and implications

At the level of this study, that implies male and female gender adolescents, with ages between 14 and 19 years old, we can find, according to the highlighted statistic data, a strong negative correlation between the time daily assigned to socialization network and the emotional intelligence. Based on the statistic interpretation of data we could ascertain the fact that there is a significant difference from statistical point of view between the female gender adolescents and male gender adolescents regarding the emotional intelligence level, girls having a higher level of the self-esteem then boys.

Considering the information obtained during the study, that is the sufficiently low level of emotional intelligence of adolescents, as well as the highlighted negative correlation between the time daily assigned to socialization networks and the emotional intelligence of adolescents, we intend, in the future, to propose and implement a personal development program for adolescents, in order to contribute evidently to their emotional intelligence development and for a better time management delineation.

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MENTORING IN LIFELONG LEARNING FOR TEACHERS-EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE

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Abstract: *This article highlight theoretical and applicative aspects of mentoring activity. There are presentedt models of good practices of the teachers involved in the activities carried out through the project Proaction for a multi-professional educational community - ProActiv, a project co-financed from the European Social Fund through the Human Capital Operational Program 2014-2020. This approach is an example of a continuous training activity that places mentorship at the center of its objectives. The activities are projected for use in metorship relation between teacher and teacher and also for teacher and student. The exempels for good practices was focused on caracter education, comunication skills and adaptativ social relations.*

Keywords: *mentoring; lifelong learning; teacher; student; best practices; non-formal education; character traits.*

In a world where the number of people suffering from low levels of self-esteem, anxiety or various phobias has increased, we must learn to be brave, motivated and involved. What does it mean? First of all, we need to know our weaknesses and strengths, to mobilize our soul to fulfil his dream, in working our coins received with all the strength and passion that we are capable of, not to despair if things don't always go the way we want, the search for models of courage, to be role models of courage, in doing everything that depends on us and nothing more.

The young people of these times carry an extraordinary force in them, which must be discovered and channelled in the right direction, so it is our dutyof adults, either we are parents or we are teachers, to teach them to follow their way, to overcome their fear, to take their responsibility, to believe in them self, to understand that the feelings, thoughts, words, actions are important, contributing to the construction of a world, a world we want quiet and beautiful for all of us. But at the same time, they face dysfunctional states given the variability of the social environment in which they live, face with challenges of the virtual environment and may have blockages in self-expressing(Dughi, Rad, Demeter, 2019; Rad at all., 2019). Their guidance in building a constructive value system and in obtaining satisfaction regarding their life and world is mostly the teacher's duty.

For reaching these goals, young people need guidance from their teachers. A responsible guidance, with respect for students' particularities and needs, based on cooperativeattitude requires teacher training appropriate to these requirements.

The teacher is no longer a simple information provider but becomes a catalyst for student transformation, a guide for them.(Herlo at all., 2014). In this way, the mentoring dimension of the teaching profession is becoming clearer and more imperative. This is why teachers also feel the need to develop these skills through their continuous training and collaboration in activities aimed at developing mentoring skills.

Mentoring is an activity with roots deep seated in Greek antiquity, specific to those who supported young people and wisely counselled them.

We find that most valuable people, each in his field, have been valuable mentors to others or they also had mentors: Aristotle was the mentor of Alexander the Great, Socrates – Plato, Archimedes - Galileo Galilei etc. (Ungureanu, D., 2001). The concept of mentoring is relatively new in Romania, in education this term is carefully debated. Initially used in the economic field, the term was taken up in the early 1980s and in the field of education by American specialists. At that time, they faced an increasing number of dropouts after the first years of education. The solution they found was the introduction of mentoring in professional adaptation programs facilitating the transition from initial training to continuing vocational training.There is no universally accepted definition of mentor and mentoring. Mentor means: "in a broad sense, a person who helps someone develop through learning; in a restricted sense, a professional working with a person, a group or an organization for personal or organizational development" (Craşovan, M., 2004).

An example of continuous training activity that places mentoring at the centre of its objectives is the project Pro Action for a multi-professional educational community – ProActiv, project co-financed from the European Social Fund through the Human Capital Operational Program2014-2020. The project is implemented by Teachers Training Centre „AlexandruGavra" Arad in partnership with Arad county School District and have the general goal applying and multiplying a complex program of professional development in order to prevent the risk of early school leaving at the county level (Ardelean, D., 2019).

The program is implemented in five schools from Arad County, having a complex structure. A first stage is that of training the teachers of the five schools for the following modules:

1. **Program A - Personalization of learning in the context of diversity in the educational environment**

This program involves identifying good practice examples in non-formal education, adapting and applying them in the educational process. It also aims to form the students'behavioural skills that make it possible to integrate them into mainstream education. It also pursues Communication in education with a focus on the relationship with parents, education for change and development, non-formal education methods and tools used to facilitate learning, working strategies for children with behavioural problems and hyperactivity, and not least school inclusion.

2. **Program B–Education forcharacter and leadership**

This program aims to raise awareness among students of the importance of being brave, cross-curricular education of the essential features in daily activities, through the activities proposed in the project, the application, in the educational process, of the cross-curricular elements and the hidden curriculum. The program also aims identification of character traits in everyday situations, identification of the consequences of courage or lack of courage, student accountability in borderline situations, the accumulation of experiences that lead to the development of courage; increased self-esteem, to familiarize students with the personalities with / without disabilities who have shown courage, personalities that, most of the times, have become leaders.

3. ProgramC-Management of an inclusive school

The purpose of this program is the creation of partnerships with different foundations, NGOs, other schools and institutions, carrying out attractive, useful, integrated, interactive extracurricular activities in order to reduce the absenteeism / school dropout.

4. **Program D - Behavioural analysis techniques applied in autism spectrum disorders.**

During this program will be highlighted the communication and language in autism - alternative communication systems and verbal behavior.

The second major stage of the project, after the completion of the teacher training, is that of implementation among the students, of all that was transmitted and accumulated during the training sessions.Where? When? How? These are just a few questions we will try to answer bellow:

Where? –in the school of each teacher involved in the project.

When? – throughout the school year.

How?–the teachers establish their target group with which they will collaborate for the implementation of the project, elaborate a project idea to be realized during the school year, during the teaching activity. To accomplish this teaching approach, the teachers will have the support of a mentor.The mentoring program involves both direct and online interaction with teachers. Principles underlying the implementation of the program:

Relevance:

•relevant problems, identified following the needs analysis;

•approaching the problem - central concepts, facilitating opportunities for the construction of learning activities focused on the needs of the target group.

Social innovation:

• education for change and development which will lead to the management of situations that can cause risk of school dropout, favouring the development of school inclusion

Proactivity:

•The personnel participating in the training will be "equipped" to deal with challenges in the schools

•practices that directly support professional development, career and successful outcomes.

Non-discrimination

•each participant will have equal opportunities

In the following, we will bring to your knowledge some examples of good practices of our colleagues, involved in the project.

Education is my chance. School dropout is an important negative aspect of our society. The most important and sad aspect of school dropout is the fact that these children, are not schooled, will not have a job/qualification, will not integrate into society, are prone to delinquent acts. In order to try to prevent this, our colleague proposes to make attractive didactic activities in order to maintain the students' interest in the school, proposing as objectives the students' responsibility by educating character traits such as wisdom, integrity, responsibility, hard work; reducing absenteeism and preventing school dropout; supporting students in achieving their goals, the school being the community of those who learn and do not drop out; preparing students for good integration into society and the labor market. Expected results are: increasing the quality of teaching activities; active participation of students in the didactic activity; improving student learning outcomes; reducing the number of absences; dropout prevention in students at risk.

Examples of activities:

A1. Motivating students to study- older students/colleagues who have completed high school and attend higher education or have a job are invited to share, explain, argue the importance of education, respectively the completion of the study cycle.Students will ask questions and will be discussions about the motivation importance for the study:Why do we learn? Who do we learn from? How much time do we spend studying? Why don't we learn?Each student will write on a sheet of paper 2 reasons why it is worth learning.

A2. The ideal school - who is responsible? - give students time to think about their ideal school. On a sheet of paper, each student notes the characteristics of the ideal school: words, phrases, drawings. There is a debate on those responsible for the ideal school (e.g. students, teachers, political leaders, etc.) and what they can do to make the school a pleasant place.

Courage is the fear of prayer. The purpose and objectives of this project were to complete the three training modules proposed by the project (Management of an inclusive school, Education for character and leadership, Personalization of learning in the context of the diversity of the educational environment). So, the colleague, who proposed this theme was determined to try to integrate the acquired knowledge, puzzle pieces, so as to create an integrated activity, which would give students a resilient base on which to build their life. The school means much more than an information provider, a means of developing character traits, of forming "people of humanity" and leaders, necessary for both the community of which they are part and the society.

Examples of activities:

A1. My symbol for courage - according to the teacher's model, each student will think of a person or a being who impressed him with courage. He will briefly tell you about it, then write down the name of the person or what the being is about. The most creative students could sketch/draw this symbol.

A2. Overcoming the fear ... Disabled personalities like Leslie Lemke, Stevie Wonder, Ray Charles, Andrea Bocelli, blind musicians; Marlee Matlin – the deaf actress; Ion Creangă, Moliere, Flaubert, Hemingway, Dostoevsky, writers, suffered from epilepsy; Alexandrucel Mare, Iulius Caesar, heads of state who suffered from epilepsy; Helen Keller, VasileAdamescu, models of courage for all of us, who faced life; Beethoven, the deaf composer; Geronimo Cardano, Charles de l 'Epee - inventors of signs for the deaf; Louis Braille - the inventor of writing in the Braille system.

Students will present an aspect that at one point frightened them very much and how they overcame that obstacle (e.g., fear of darkness).

The teacher will give each student an envelope in which there will be a leaflet with information about VasileAdamescu - a personality with disabilities, who has overcome his fear, becoming a role model for everyone else.

Today educated students, tomorrow people of character.

The argument for the implementation of this project is related to the education of children. There is a lot of talk about the knowledge and skills that students accumulate within the education system and which are so needed for their future. There is too much emphasis on the amount of information accumulated by the student and too little is discussed about the character that the child develops in all these years. Indeed, the character is given by hereditary inheritance but can be modelled through education and social environment. Clearly, the moral decline among young people affects the whole society.

From our colleague’s point of view, it does not matter how much knowledge you have about the world or about a certain field, or how many skills you have, if you have an unworthy character you will use that information that you have in a selfish and harmful way to society. Instead, a man of good faith, with a good character, will do good to those around him. The purpose in the aforementioned context, character education is a necessity and a responsibility that rests with all teachers. Thus, implementing this educational project, our colleague intends to invest real time to understand each student individually, to observe their personality traits and to succeed through the proposed programs to help them and to motivate them to develop harmoniously and balanced. In order to make real progress, he has integrated elements of character education into the programs proposed in the weekly activities of the class.

Examples of activities:

A1. Formation and education of wisdom as a character trait - Dramatization - Role play.

By the method of dramatization, students will be put in different situations inspired by real life. The education of the concept of wisdom will be done using the individual and group activities, for imaginative purposes, with the emphasis on language acts: description, characterization, expression of feelings, opinion, summary, change of point of view. Using their judgment, they will show wisdom by making the right choices. After interpreting the scenes, the students will freely express their opinion, they will highlight the good facts that denote certain traits but also the mistakes or lack of certain character traits. Through dramatization and discussions that happen in the role play, children understand notions with positive content such as wisdom, perspective, discretion, etc., but also those with negative content that attract certain consequences.

Reflection:I have something to say!*"Wisdom means anticipating the consequences of your actions." Norman Cousins*

A2. Forming and educating wisdom as a character trait - "Stories full of meaning- tell me what you give to tell you what you will receive."

A brainstorming session is organized and three short stories are told through alternate reading. Students have the task of formulating as many ideas as possible, they will retain the ideas relevant to the proposed topic and they will be used to solve group tasks, focusing on the concept of wise/unwise choices. Each group of students will write on the sheet, vertically, the word "WISDOM". At the same time, the students will write a sentence beginning with each letter about how the characters in the fairy tales have shown wisdom.

These educational project ideas can be a point of reference for a larger project. I would love very much, in the future, to be able to develop more joint activities with parents because the students come to school with the "baggage" of the family. All our efforts are in vain when the example form home is at odds with what we are promoting. Parents are the first attachment figure, and as teachers we have to find ways to get "under the skin" of the children in order to smooth out these character traits that are waiting to come to the surface. For these reasons, additional efforts should be made to "educate" parents and their children.

By structure and content, these projects require a flexible and application-oriented approach, which will contribute to self-knowledge and the formation of their own value system. Weekly activities with students include concrete means and methods that contribute to character development, increased self-esteem, reduced school dropout, and school inclusion. The emphasis is mainly on these because they largely determine the success of children with special educational requirements and not only, success in school activities but also in life: self-control, perseverance, optimism, gratitude, enthusiasm, curiosity and social intelligence.

The project recommends that learning be carried out within attractive activities, which will stimulate the participation of students in the lesson. All these activities carried out together with a mentor have as a continuous purpose the formation and development of communication and an attitude adapted to the relationship with others.

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EDUCATIONAL BEHAVIORS FOR BODY APPRECIATION INCREASE AND POSITIVE EATING ATTIDUDES FOR CHILDREN

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Abstract. *Body appreciation and eating behavior among children has to receive a special attention in the psychological and health literature, so that the society together with the family can prevent body image impairment for children and obtain their positive body appreciation and to decrease their negative eating attitudes. . The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationship between child's body appreciation, their eating attitude and the importance of their parents' educational behaviors in the context of parental marital status. In this respect, 265 children from different schools have completed psychological instruments that measure the level of body appreciation, children's eating attitudes and they give demographic data which contain their parent's marital status. For statistical purposes, r Pearson correlation and t Test were run. The results showed that a lower level of body appreciation correlates with a higher level of negative eating attitudes of Romanian children and no significant differences were found between children who have divorced parents and children who are in a united family in terms of attitude towards food and body appreciation.*

Keywords: body image; eating attitude; body appreciation; body appearance; marital status;

1.Introduction

The favorable family environment for each child is the key of developing a viable society. The family is the environment in which a child benefits from those sources to form and consolidate as an integral and complex personality. Children love predictability and stability. For them it is very important to know what is going to happen. When they live in an environment where things change from one day to another or parents have different reactions to the same behavior, the children's stress response system is constantly activated (they are guarded up, prepared to deal with unforeseen situations). This permanent state of alertness sensitizes certain areas of the brain that are responsible for preparing the body to face the threat. This explains why living in environments where things change frequently, children get to experience intense emotional reactions, starting from small things as experiencing negative eating attitudes which ca led to a body modification and in this context to a decrease of body appreciation.

The evolution of Maslow's pyramid, however, does not attract relaxation, in our days other needs are amplified. In this context, we are talking about aesthetic needs or self-realization - needs that, once reached, are expanding and are increasingly present. These aesthetic needs can be manifested through different behaviors, for example, the desire to have a weak, thin body which is the result of the pressure of our society and refers to the ideas of opinion makers (Garner, Qlmsted, Poiivy & Garfinkel, 1984; Mazur, 1986). For many people weight loss cures or refraining from eating has become the normal eating pattern.

Frequent exposure to attractiveness standards based on different environments, often thin (female) or muscular (for men), leads to a more negative perception of one's body (Agliata and Tantleff-Dunn 2004).

Also, studies show that, from preschool, children begin to express their preference for thin, weak, filiform body types, and a girl as young as 5 years old, which makes some researchers worry about voicing their fears regarding the fact that these children face problems related to the physical stimulation of the body, a self-assessment of the body and physical appearance (Tremblay, Lovsin, Zecevic and Lariviere, 2011).

Although preschoolers still do not understand the sexual implications but many are aware that body fat is not beneficial and unwanted by women (Tremblay et al., 2011) and of course it is important for women to be beautiful (Smolak & Murnen, 2011).

Being skinny is highly appreciated in our society, especially among women, because a thin, thin, filiform body is often equated with being attractive. These social messages have become so universal that these values and views are already supported even by children under the age of 7.

There is evidence through various specialized studies that suggest that children actually learn from their families, teachers, friends and the media, society in general, that fat is "something bad" and thin is good "and learns these theories before to enter the vulnerable period of adolescence (Flannery-Schroeder & Chrisler, 1996).

Some studies show that girls and boys between the ages of 7 and 11 find that overweight young people have fewer friends, are less liked by parents, have poorer school results, are lazy, are less attentive to school and are less attractive than normal or weak-looking children (Hill & Silver, 1995; Tiggemann & Wilson-Barrett, 1998).

Improving body image among children, has received special attention in the literature, in the field of health, given the problematic behavior of nutrition during this period (Crow, Eisenberg, Story, & Neumark-Sztainer, 2006; Johnson & Wardle, Presnell, & Spangler, 2002), therefore, in recent decades, many researchers have emphasized through many articles, the importance of a positive perception of body image as Smolak & Cash (2011) and Tylka (2012), concentrated on a complete description of the concept of body image. Trying to review the ways in which the body image is defined, we find that the following definition is unanimously accepted: "mental representation of information related to the physical aspect, information resulting from the perception of one's body" (Schilder, 1950 beside Grogan, 2008). One of its facets that has benefited from this attention is body appreciation, defined as "accepting, maintaining favorable opinions about the body and respecting the body, also rejecting the ideals promoted by the media as the only form of human beauty" (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015).

In a longitudinal study conducted with the help of mostly Caucasian American girls during adolescence, it was found that intense pressure to be thin from family members predicted the girls' body dissatisfaction a year later. More specific information on the content of comments related to physical appearance is needed to understand how family communication and educational behaviors shapes the body image of adolescent girls (Stice and Whitenton, 2002).

Mothers are key socio-cultural agents who can influence their daughters to accept or reject body forms and dimensions. Studies in recent years, which reveal how negative feedback is related to poor body image of girls, are a major contribution to the literature. However, the benefits of positive family communication on body image are far less understood. (Romo, Mireles-Rios, 2016). Also, families and parents should be a resource to prevent obesity, as counseling by parents is an intervention method that should be more intensely used (Goian, 2019).

Although it is well known that the pressure of the family and of the modern media on the body aspect can have negative consequences for both adults and children, in Romania the articols that study this aspect are very few. Recently, two instruments have been translated and validated that measure body appreciation and adult muscularity preferences (Swami, Tudorel, Goian, Barron and Vintila, 2017; Swami, Vintila, Tudorel, Goian and Barron, 2018).

However, more studies are needed to investigate the risk factors that lead to negative consequences on body image for adults, children and adolescents. Children should be educated to be aware that they have the right to live a healthy life, from both mental and physical aspects, to help manage their problems to create and develop a healthy environment, becoming responsible for their well-being. (Vintilă, Marklinder, Nydahl, Istrat and Kuglis, 2009).

During adolescence there seems to be a time when dissatisfaction and maladaptive eating patterns are common (Cooke, 2004), and many specialists have argued that concerns about body image and disordered eating patterns develop much earlier than adolescence.

Supporting this assertion, there is evidence that even young children may show signs of body dissatisfaction and exhibit a certain attitude toward unhealthy eating (Robinson, 2001). Researchers have identified a number of factors related to improper food consumption. These include a thin body shape as a preferred type in our society (Garner, et all. , 1984).

Girls and boys between the ages of 7 and 11 consider overweight young people as having fewer friends, being less liked by parents, having poorer school results, being lazy, less attentive to school and less attractive than normal or skinny-looking children (Hill & Silver, 1995).

In a similar study conducted with children between the ages of 7 and 10, Shapiro, Newcomb, and Leob (1997) found that 45% of girls and 38% of boys in their study considered it important for women to be thin, and 35% of girls and 33% of boys felt that it was also important for men to be thin.

Since it is so important to be thin, there should be many children who report dissatisfaction with body size and appearance, worry about being overweight and engaging in weight loss behaviors. Such concern with the size and shape of the body among children is reflected in the large number of studies that in recent years have examined concerns about body image and eating attitudes and behaviors among children.

Due to the fact that families are an integral part of eating behavior, childhood obesity refers in particular to children who are experiencing changes that occur in the family especially as they navigate puberty (Rhee, 2008).

Unfortunately, at present almost one in two marriages ends with a divorce, with approximately one million children being involved in these separations (Amoto, 2000). There are a number of known risk factors for children who have experienced obesity. Currently, there is an abundance of data on children's anthropometric characteristics (physical measurements of body weight and height) and physical activity. However, previous research has found that even after controlling for physical activity for children, divorce remains a significant predictor of BMI in older children (Yannakoulia, 2007).

Parental divorce is a period of "family revolution", but it is known for a number of processes that link the family structure to obesity.

The results of the studies showed that pre-adolescents from divorced families consumed more sweetened carbonated drinks than pre-adolescents from married families and there was a reduced tendency of breakfast among pre-adolescents in divorced families (Yannakoulia, 2007).

Parental influence and family functioning play an essential role in the development of children in healthy eating behaviors specifically, the pattern of healthy eating behaviors and control of children's food intake, diet quality, portion size and exposure of children to different foods existing in the home (Rhee, 2008).

2. *Methods*

Therefore, the purpose of our study is to analyze the relationship between body appreciation, and eating attitudes of children. We would also like to find out if there are differences in eating attitudes and body appreciation for children who have different parental education in terms of mono-parental context. Thus, the following hypotheses were formulated:

H1. A low level of body appreciation correlates with a high level of negative attitude towards eating in children

H2. There are differences between children with divorced parents (separated, remarried, deceased) and those with married parents regarding the eating attitudes

H3. There are differences between children with divorced parents (separated, remarried, deceased) and those with married parents regarding the level of body appreciation

2.1 ***Participants***

In this study 265 students (n = 265) were involved, of which 57% were boys and came from 3 different schools in Timisoara and its peripheral aria. The students ranged in age from 9 to 13 years (M = 10.25; SD = 1.08) and attended different classes, from the third to the sixth grade. All students were Romanian citizens and came from different socio-economic backgrounds.

2.2. ***Instruments***

In order to highlight the results, we used two instruments that were given to the children to fill to measure the level of body appreciation among children, as well as to measure their eating attitudes. Also demographic data's were provided containing the children's parental status.

Body Appreciation Scale-2 for Children (BAS-2C; Halliwella, Jarmana, Tylka, Slater, 2017). This instrument is an Adult Body Appreciation Scale that was adapted in the form of BAS-2C by Tylka and Wood-Barcalow in 2015, which has been translated and validated on the Romanian population by Swami, Tudorel, Goian, Barron and Vintilă in 2017. This scale at its turn was adapted for its use in children, BAS-2C having a one-dimensional factor structure and evidence of good internal consistency, test-retest fidelity and construct validity, related to criteria and incremental validity. In addition, the results suggest adaptive properties of body appreciation for emotional and body well-being among children. The tool contains 10 items with responses on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 = never; 5 = always.

This instrument has a good internal consistency and in the case of the present study Alfa Cronbach was .87.

Chidren Eatting Attitude Test (Linda Smolak and Michael P. Levine in 1993 developed an Eating Atitude Test which has a child friendly form developed by Maloney, McCuire and Daniels in 1988)

This test was proposed because it has been found that as the interest in eating disorders is increasing, there is also an increased need for psychometric measurements regarding attitudes and behaviors towards eating in children. The answers were given using the Likert scale, where 1 = never, and 6 = very often. ChEAT has a questionable internal consistency; Cronbach's Alpha was .69 for our study.

Demographic data. All the participants provided demographic data with reference to the age, environment of origin and family status of the parents.

2.3 Procedure

The aforementioned tools were given to the children to be filled out by the pencil-paper method. At the beginning of the completion, all the children were informed about the process and specific words found in these tools that they didn't understand it was explained and received information about the time required to complete the questionnaires. While completing these scales, they were monitored if they needed for help and explanations. The effective completion of the instruments took place in their own classrooms to make them comfortable and to be familiar with the place.

3. Results

The datas were collected and subsequently analyzed and interpreted using SPSS for Windows, v. 20.0. This study is a correlational and comparative non-experimental one. To investigate the correlations between the variables we used the r Pearson correlation coefficient, and we also used t Tests for independent groups to investigate the differences between children who have divorced parents and children who are in a united family in terms of eating attitudes and body appreciation.

H1. A low level of body appreciation correlates with a high level of negative attitude towards eating in children

The results show that eating attitudes is negatively correlated with body appreciation. Thus, a lower level of body appreciation correlates with a higher level of negative eating attitudes $r = -.207$, $p < .01$; effect size $r^2 = .04$, which represents a medium effect.
(Tabel 1).

Tabel 1. *Correlations between the variables included in the study*

Variabile	1	2
ChEA	-.207**	-
BA	-	-.207**

p < .01; ChEAT = eating attitudes; BA –body appreciation

H2. There are differences between children with divorced parents (separated, remarried, deceased) and those with married parents regarding the eating attitudes

In order to highlight the differences that exist regarding the children's eating attitudes with divorced parents and those with married parents, we used t tests for independent groups. The results in our study did not support the hypothesis, there are no statistically significant differences between the children's eating attitudes with divorced parents and those with married parents (t = .114, p = .910, p> .05).

Tabel 2. Differences between the parents marital status and children's eating attitudes

Variabile	1	2
ChEA	-.207**	-
BA	-	-.207**

ChEAT = eatting attitudes

H3. There are differences between children with divorced parents (separated, remarried, deceased) and those with married parents regarding the level of body appreciation

To highlight the differences that exist in terms of body appreciation in children with divorced parents and those with married parents, we used t-tests for independent groups. Nor did these results support the hypothesis, there are no statistically significant differences between the body appreciation in children with divorced parents and those with married parents (t = -.959, p = .342, p> .05).

Tabel 3. Differences between the parents marital status and children's body appreciation

Variable	t	p
BAS	-.959	.342

BAS = body appreciation

4. *Discussion*

The present study was conducted to emphasize that thru a good, healthy parental educational behavior can obtain the satisfaction and appreciation of an increased body image and a decrease of negative eating attitudes for children It is also emphasized in other researches that during this period of childhood (9-12 years

- the beginning of puberty) a child can gain about 10 kg and 20 cm in height. (Munteanu, 2007). Adolescents are particularly vulnerable, because body image is particularly important while they undergo significant physical and psychological changes in puberty (Ricciardelli and Yager, 2015). These changes can be difficult to manage in terms of body appreciation. A person may be dissatisfied with a particular part of the body or its general form, or may be dissatisfied with his body as a whole.

In order for these children to understand, it is recommended that a parent inoculate a correct scale of values, especially nowadays, when physical appearance can cause an anxiety crisis (Munteanu, 2007). The dissatisfaction of the body image can be defined as the inconsistency between how a person perceives the body and how they would like to be from the ideal point of view of their body (Maxwell & Cole, 2012). It is very important to pay special attention to sports and healthy eating for all family members and to avoid family members' comments about body weight or body shape during this vulnerable period (Gavrila-Ardelean, Gavrila-Ardelean, 2016).

Inheriting the idea of dissatisfaction with the body aspect can be a maladaptive, transgenerational thought because research shows that mothers especially seem to have an effect on how their daughters perceived their body appearance. Their mother's comments, which sent negative comments about their body, caused them to reflect on their body appearance (Curtis & Loomans, 2014).

Adolescents whose colleagues or family members have negative attitudes about overweight have been found to be more dissatisfied with their bodies than girls whose family members have no negative attitudes about weight (Paxton et al., 1999) and girls who - they felt more accepted by their parents, especially the father, were less dissatisfied with their body appearance (Barker & Galambos, 2003).

It was included in the present study the interest regarding the attitude towards eating of the children because I considered that there is a predisposition of the children to have maladaptive eating tendencies during this period. As Schultz showed in a study conducted in 2016, dietary behaviors are associated with food consumption and are often identified as one of the many factors contributing to the development of childhood obesity. Behavior, to some extent, is supported and motivated by what an individual tacitly believes and knows to be true. What children and adolescents know about food consumption is critical, as eating behaviors are set at the age of 4-6, being obese at this age is predictive of being obese as an adult (Brisbois, Farmer & McCargar, 2012). What children and adolescents know about food consumption may explain why nearly 17% of children between the ages of 2 and 19 are obese (Ogden, Carroll, Kit & Flegal, 2014). In the case of our study it was shown that a low level of body appreciation correlates with a high level of negative children eating attitudes, which indicates that in the case of children dissatisfaction with their body aspects are correlated with a maladaptive attitude in those who looks at nutrition and eating behaviors.

Through this study we expect to obtain differences regarding the attitude towards food and body appreciation in children with divorced parents and those who have married parents because the review of the specialized literature has shown that the preadolescents from divorced families consumed more sweetened carbon dioxide drinks than pre-adolescents from families with married parents and there was a tendency for reduced consumption of breakfast among pre-adolescents in divorced families (Yannakoulia, 2007). It was also found that, in fact, even after controlling for physical activity for children, divorce remained a significant predictor of adolescent body mass index level. (Yannakoulia, 2007).

Body image research has been largely biased towards focusing on negative body image, but over the past decade there has been an increased interest in understanding a range of positive body image constructs, including body appreciation, body acceptance, and broad conceptualization of beauty (Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2015).

These new developments have allowed a more complete and comprehensive understanding of body image, including the development of additional scales to measure the positive aspects of body image.

Advocates of positive body image tend to consider that positive body image is not just the reverse of negative body image, but has unique elements that require understanding (Tylka, 2011). These elements are: the favorable opinion of the body aspect, regardless of its real appearance; acceptance of the body despite the weight, imperfections and body shape; respect for the body by engaging in healthy behaviors and responding to its needs and rejecting media images that help protect the body. These items were incorporated into a Body Appreciation Scale, which was found to be valid (Avalos, Tylka & Wood-Barcalow, 2005) and used for our study.

A process of counseling by professionals like psychologists, social workers could also help improve this situation (Gavrila-Ardelean, Gavrila-Ardelean, 2017). Social support can be view as a protective factor that could reduce the effect of stressful, overwhelming life events (Tudorel & Vintilă, 2018). In order for this to happen professionals should be equipped with adequate skills and communication abilities (Goian, 2004, Goian, 2010). Future studies could investigate the effect of exposure to the natural environment on improving children's body image, as studies already provide evidence of the beneficial effect of nature on body appreciation (Swami et al., 2019).

In the case of our study, the differences regarding the children whose parents have different marital status were not highlighted. There were no differences regarding the corporal appreciation and the attitude towards food of the children who had divorced parents and those who had a united family.

5. Limitation

Like other studies also the current study contains limitation that must be recognized. First, although the participating schools, from which the participants were chosen, belong as classified in different socio-economic environments, the sample mainly comprised individuals from the surrounding areas of the city. Also the age range was 9-13 years and this limits our ability to generalize the findings for older children and adolescents, as well as for children who come and attend well-rated schools in Timisoara. The recommendation for future research is to include in studies a more diverse range of age, ethnicity and geographical location.

6. Conclusion

In our study we tried to highlight the fact that a low level of body appreciation correlates with a high level of negative attitude towards eating in children, as shown by the results of this study. Following the review of the literature, it was pointed out that pre-adolescents from families with divorced parents have a more disorganized eating behavior than pre-adolescents from families whose parents are still married. These differences we tried to highlight also through the present work, but our results in this respect did not support the hypotheses. We did not obtain results showing differences between children with divorced parents (separated, remarried, deceased) and those with married parents regarding eating attitudes and body appreciation.

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DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATIONAL RELATIONS WITH NONFORMAL ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: *The accomplishment of common activities establishes between the members of the respective group interdependence relations in order to reach a specific goal. The personality of the students is shaped and manifests itself in interdependence with the life of the group of which he is part, with the norms and values that he develops. The interaction in the class of students produces a social organization of the class. This form of organization of the class of students, offers to those who compose it, the possibility of establishing relationships and interactions, both at school level - formal and extracurricular - nonformal. In these contexts, the student behaves differently or constantly compared to the members of the group, whom he has the opportunity to know and to formulate the elements of a possible value judgment on them. Interval can be successfully carried out in and through educational interactions. Through this study we want to capture the relationships of collegiality in the non-formal activities, identified by the teachers in the primary cycle. Thus, 67 teachers from 4 pre-university education units in the urban area completed the questionnaire consisting of 15 items. The questionnaire is its own conception, and it wants to capture the personal opinions and attitudes of the questioned teachers. The conclusions show that the teachers in the primary cycle consider non-formal activities to be relevant in developing and strengthening the relationships between students as well as between teachers and students.*

Keywords:education; communication; relationships; non-formal activities; teachers appreciation;

Introduction:

The didactic communication within the formal framework, is one of training-bearing contents, has a learning effect and aims at modifying and stabilizing the behavior. In order to establish optimal communication relationships, the teacher must use its functions of information-training, evaluation-control, stimulating and promoting group cohesion, socio-cultural unity, to facilitate the group to become a frame of reference for the individual. Not the presence of the "personages" teacher-pupil / students gives a communication the didactic character, but the observance of the legalities supposed by a systematic act of learning. Thus, the didactic communication may occur between different other "actors", provided that the resource character exceeds the status of informant.

The communication in the non-formal activities acquires more direct and efficient valences, the actors involved in the educational act approach their standards, do not use a formal expression, but rather a conjunctural one, related to the event, to the respective non-formal activity. What is relevant is that neither teachers nor students feel the need for hierarchical communication. The teacher-student communication takes place in a relaxing environment, w **Theoretical framework**

By communication we mean the transmission of a message from the sender to the receiver through a channel or means of communication. The dictionary of pedagogical terms presents the definition of pedagogical communication as "an axiomatic principle of education that involves an educational message, elaborated by the subject (teacher), capable of provoking the formative reaction of the object of education (preschool, student, student, etc.), evaluable in terms of external and internal connection ”(Ciobanu, 2003).

C. Cucoș presents the didactic communication as "a complex, multifaceted and multi-channel transfer of information between two entities (individuals or groups) that simultaneously and successively assume the roles of transmitters and receivers signifying the desirable contents in the context of the instructional-educational process" (Cucoș, 2014).

The pedagogical paradigm of didactic communication makes it necessary to approach the psychosocial paradigm (Golu, P., Slama-Cazacu, T.), which reflects the communication processes from the perspective of interaction. communication as a social fact, fulfills addressing functions, through which man communicates not only with his fellow men, but also with himself. in other words, interpersonal communication begins at the intrapersonal level. this paradigm presents arguments in favor of the fact that the communication relation initially manifests itself almost instinctively, in order to evolve towards the need for relation and integration in the group. For these reasons, A. Dragu, S. Cristea states that, in fact, communication pedagogical is social type, the teacher transmitting the pedagogical message below to the group of students form of information, presented as a set of data and indicators that modify the internal state of to the receptors, provoking a response according to the individual particularities of transmitter. The didactic information thus gains meaning through the contribution of knowledge, but and through self-regulating and self-organizing systems (9, p. 153).

The student, in the conditions of the school life, does not live in isolation, but in a social gear, his affective life, intellectual activity and no less professional activity, taking place inside and in interdependence with the socio-school environment or under the conditions given by it (Collier, 1983). All the relational ramifications in the class of students form in the psychosocial plane a special category of inter-personal relations. In the case of the student class, the inter-personal relations have a new constitutive, ethical, moral character (Iucu, 2006).

Non-formal education represents the set of actions organized intentionally, systematically, unfolded in an insistent context, but outside the education system, in institutions that do not have an explicit educational destination. Non-formal educational activities are less formalized, but they are designed and realized by the teacher, in accordance with well-defined and delimited educational purposes, so that they generate educational and informational influences (Bocoș, M., Jucan, D., 2017).

In the specialized literature we find multiple ways of describing and defining non-formal education:

- M. Stefan in the Pedagogical Lexicon describes the non-formal education as a set of activities organized outside the school curricula, out of the compulsory nature, which allow the leisure to spend according to the wishes of the children;
- according to the authors Costea O., Cerkez M., Sarivan L., non-formal education represents any educational activity organized outside the existing formal system, which is meant to respond to the educational needs of a particular group and which pursues clear learning objectives (2009, p.10);
- Coombs, Ph. define non-formal education as an organized and systematic activity, carried out outside the formal framework of education, in order to complete and facilitate the learning of those interested in perfecting themselves in a certain field;
- UNESCO, in 1990 defined non-formal education as being composed of any organized and sustained educational activities that do not exactly correspond to what I call formal education. this can be done inside or outside the educational institutions, and is addressed to people of all ages.
- According to the law of national education, Nr. 1/2011, learning in non-formal contexts is considered as integrated learning within planned activities, with learning objectives, which do not explicitly follow a curriculum and may differ in duration. This type of learning depends on the intention of the learner and does not automatically lead to the certification of acquired knowledge and skills.

The skills and attitudes developed to students in non-formal learning include: interpersonal skills, teamwork ability, self-confidence, discipline, responsibility, planning, coordination and organization skills/project management skills, ability to solve practical problems, etc. As these skills have a high relevance in the personal development of the individual, contributing both to the active participation in the society and in the labor market, they are complementary to those acquired through formal education. The methods used are very different from the pedagogy used in formal education. In the case of non-formal education, the focus is on action learning, peer learning and volunteering.

Psycho-pedagogical implications of non-formal activities on the development of educational relationships

T. M. Lodahl and M. Keyner (1980) defined involvement in educational activity as the degree to which a person psychologically identifies with his or her activity. So the involvement would be the importance of learning activities in the self-image. In the non-formal activities, the area of involvement is not reduced to the singular, but, on the contrary, in the interaction the students can manifest an attitude of involvement, or on the contrary, of apathy, indifference, non-commitment. As a possible synonym, the term of social involvement is related to those of "participation", "socialization", but the semantic assumption is not total.

The process of educational influence is defined by the majority of specialized works as "organized and structured educational action, exercised on a person, in order to constitute, train or change behaviors, attitudes, etc." (Ullich, 1995).

Educational interaction is an aspect, a form of the multitude and variety of interpersonal relationships in the class of students. Regarding a possible classification of interpersonal relations in the class of students, the criterion used is the psychological needs and needs when they relate to each other. This results in the following types of interpersonal relationships in the class of students (Iucu, 2006):

• *Relationships of interconnection*: it derives from the need to have some information regarding the other, his way of being, his personality. The more information that a teacher has at one point about his students, and a certain student about the other colleagues are very diverse and consistent, the more dynamic the universe of the respective interactions is. the central element of this type of interpersonal relationship is the image of the partners about each other, and about themselves.

Interconnection occurs more complex through the non-formal activities. Basically, the actors of the non-formal education act live an unexpected interconnection relationship, beyond the formal space, that of the classroom. The interconnection relationship from non-formal activities brings to attention unique aspects of personality: hidden talents of teachers, students, inclinations and preferences.

• *Intercommunication relationships*: they appear as a result of what people, children, when they interact, feel the need to inform each other, to exchange information, to communicate. The class, as a universe of communication, constitutes for students an open universe of informational challenges, with exchanges of messages, with frequent and intense evaluations regarding the situation of the inter-communication process within the group.

In order to establish an authentic communication relationship, it is necessary for the interaction to work according to the principle of circularity, which means the creation of a permanent feed-back opportunity. Authors such as Hellriegel, Slocum and Woodman (1992) find it essential that in a non-formal activity, the teacher should provide students with a motivating feed-back. In this regard, the authors draw a few guidelines, and the feedback provided by the teacher should:

- is based on the trust between the sender and the receiver;
- be rather specific than general, preferably contain recent examples;
- be offered at a time when the receiver, the student, seems to be ready to accept it;
- to include those things that the student is capable of accomplishing, not to include more than what the student can achieve during the time provided by the respective activity.

• Socio-affective relationships: they are the result of the intervention of a need for interpersonal time, which takes into account the exchange of emotions, feelings and affective-sympathetic structures. The fundamental characteristics of the affective-sympathetic relationships in the classroom are spontaneity, sincerity, disproportion between the extent of the affection and cause, the need for reciprocity in the positive affective exchanges and the overestimation of the feelings when they become aware of them. The absence of the group of students of affectivity can lead to negative effects in the plane of the interactional capacities of the students. The affective-sympathetic relationships are a condition for the development of the personality of the students.

The socio-affective relations related to the non-formal activities are defined by a complex structure, the complexity being portrayed by the realities of the social group. This relation is installed in the groups of students, being a similarity relation, strongly anchored in the syntax of the class of students. A component of the socio-affective relationship is given by consensus, that is, the way in which group members relate to the main issues of the group. The higher this consensus, the better the group works, it shows unity, efficiency. The consensus makes the group stronger, more relevant, more worthy of performing educational activity.

Another component of the socio-affective relationship is given by cohesion, the way that members of a group can coagulate around ideas, as a result of consensus. The level of cohesion of a class of students is higher the more the consensus points are. Cohesion is somewhat implicit in the evolution of the class of students, due to the fact that students spend a consistent time together, but cohesion is enhanced by the fact that students have common formal activities, similar goals, and non-formal activities unite them. Cohesion is a social indicator of the functionality and efficiency of a society.

• Influence relations: they are determined by the position each occupies in the subjective and objective hierarchies of the class group. In the school environment we meet groups of students in which cohesion has to suffer, they are dangerous and educational subgroups. In these situations, non-formal activities can be a remedial solution.

Previous perspectives

As a result of the current trends towards a global knowledge society, a significant change in the educational orientations can be observed in our country, consisting both in increasing the participation of young people in education and in diversifying the offer of the education system, completed in parallel with that of the education system. alternative or non-formal education. Thus, the rate of inclusion in education at all levels has increased from 55% in 2001 to 61% in 2008.

As expected, another form of learning that is gaining ground among young people is non-formal education, which knows a rate. higher to more recent generations: 18% young people between 20 and 24 years old, compared to older people: only 11% young people over 25 years old (ISE, 2010). In fact, at least one third of young people (approx. 36%) recognize extracurricular forms of learning as being appropriate to their professional development needs and only 12% of young people consider them inadequate for their training requirements (Guidelines and values regarding alienations regarding career and work, ANSIT, 2008). Participation in non-formal education among young people, whose average is approx. 15% according to the surveys (ISE, 2010), is maintained at relatively high levels compared to other European countries, where the degree of participation is on average 10%, approaching Romania with countries with a tradition in this field, such as Great Britain or Denmark (European Youth Report, 2009).

From the study Implementation of the preparatory class, the Romanian educational system, in the 2012-2013 school year, carried out by the Institute of Education Sciences, shows that the cooption for the educational programs of the type after school is found in a percentage of about ten times higher among the parents from urban area than in rural area, namely 23.9% urban compared to 2.3% rural. Also, the opportunities for organizing extracurricular activities in partnership with various institutions and NGOs are greater in cities than in rural areas. Abroad, After-school programs have been working successfully for many years, with a clear development of them, from one kindergarten to another.

In the education system in Romania, starting with the 2011-2012 school year, the School otherwise works, which is a national program whose purpose is to contribute to the development of learning competence and socio-emotional skills among preschoolers / students.

The program has a duration of 5 consecutive working days during the school year and can be carried out on the basis of a schedule that remains at the decision of each school, according to the order of the minister of education and research regarding the structure of the school year, valid for the respective school year. Within this program it is facilitated the participation of all the students enrolled in a form of education in different educational activities of non-formal character.

In 2013, the Institute of Education Sciences aimed to analyze the way of carrying out the Program of extracurricular and extracurricular educational activities entitled The school otherwise. 1715 teachers were involved in data collection, of which 82.6% consider the initiative of this program useful, the share of teachers who appreciate the program decreases with the level of schooling of children (86.3% in primary education, 77, 9% in high school). Depending on the area of residence, the teachers who teach in rural schools appreciate the program more (87.6% as opposed to 77.4% in the urban area).

But, only within this program can non-formal educational activities be organized, or would their benefit be more imopact if these activities were organized staggered, throughout a school year? Are teachers in primary education willing to design and organize such activities outside the national program? Do teachers identify opportunities to implement non-formal activities in favor of relational facilitation of students? These are some of the questions that the present study is trying to find an answer to.

Study case - teachers opinion

The questionnaire, its own conception, made up of 15 items, out of which 3 questions are for the identification of the teachers in the pre-university education that complete the questionnaire, and 12 questions are specific, and ask for the objective expression of the teachers' opinions regarding the importance of the non-formal activities on the development, to strengthen the relational relationship between students, but also between teachers and students.

The questionnaire was completed by 67 teachers who work in 4 different educational units in the urban environment. From the analysis and interpretation of the data we can conclude:

- According to the form of employment of the teachers who have completed the questionnaire, we can conclude that 82% are employed for an indefinite period, 16% have concluded contracts with the educational units for a fixed period, 2% are retired teachers, but who also - extended the period of didactic activity;
- Of the total number of teachers who completed the questionnaire, 97% are female, and only 3% male;
- The age distribution of teachers is as follows: 10% are between the ages of 25-36 years, 53% between 36-45 years, 25% between 46-55 years and 12% are over 56 years old. All the teachers who completed the questionnaire graduated from higher education in the field of education sciences;
- From the analysis of the questionnaires completed by teachers, it was found that 64% of them consider that the 5-day program of the Week is otherwise sufficient for designing and conducting non-formal activities. Those 36% who stated that these non-formal activities may have a higher frequency than the one in the program, consider that these activities should be carried out periodically, but it remains to the discretion of the framework to determine their frequency and duration;
- Teachers who consider the national program sufficient for carrying out non-formal activities argue by: the agglomeration of the program of activities in which the student is involved (15.9%), the perception of this type of activity as being less important than the usual hours of the course (14.1 %), the risk of unwanted events, accidents, absenteeism, etc. 13.4%, additional request for teachers (11.3%), reduction of teaching time (9.3%), fatigue of students and teachers;
- To the question about how often they organize non-formal activities in a school year outside the national program the week otherwise, the teachers answered

as follows: 7% say they organize such activities every two weeks, 12% claim that such activities carries out monthly with the class of students, 39% confirm that outside the national program, maximum 2 times per semester they organize non-formal activities with the class of students, 16% of the teachers who completed the questionnaire did not have an objective analysis of the number of non-formal activities they proposed, and 26% consider that the additional organization of non-formal activities is not necessary;

- Regarding the communication, 58% of the teachers consider that during the non-formal activities the interpersonal relations between the students are improving, the inter-communication between them results from the action cooperation in the non-formal activities, 27% have stated in the non-formal activities the group of students remains divided into other subgroups based on previous friendships, and 15% consider that during the non-formal activities negative feelings, sometimes reciprocal, of the students, come out, possibly due to the increased competitiveness;
- Among the positive feelings identified by the teachers during the non-formal activities, they mentioned: the joy of being part of the class of students, acceptance, feeling of belonging to the group of students, attachment to colleagues, trust in their own strength, satisfaction for performing work tasks;
- Among the negative feelings of the students caught during the non-formal activities, the questioned teachers surprised: anxiety, frustration, worry, sadness, confusion.
- Asked if, in the light of non-formal activities, they feel closer to the students, 78% of the teachers answered yes, 15% consider that from the non-formal activities the teacher-student relationship does not perceive changes, and 7% said they cannot assess whether non-formal activities influence in some way the relationship between the professions-students;
- The item what asking the teachers to prioritize the skills and attitudes developed to the students in the non-formal activities, we can conclude the following: 27% of the teachers consider that, the interpersonal skills of the students will register improvements through the participation in non-formal activities, 7% appreciate that student discipline will see improvements, 22% of teachers appreciate that students 'self-confidence will increase, 13% believe that the ability to work in teams of students will be enhanced, 19% of the questioned teachers say that the students' responsibility will know improvements, and 12% express their opinion on improving the students' planning capacity, problem solving;
- Analyzing the availability of teachers about the participation of a course of management of non-formal activities, they showed their willingness to participate 82%, and 18% stated that they would not be willing to participate in such training.

Conclusions

Being a high performing teacher means being a significant presence in both the objective and subjective lives of students. In spite of the constitutive asymmetry existing in the class of students, regarding the status of superiority of the teacher, the student-teacher relationship can no longer be conceived as a relationship of dependence of the student teacher, or as an abstract communication relation. The teacher's authority is not reduced to the possession of specialized knowledge, but derives from his ability to alternate the teaching start-ups, adapting their educational situations, to distribute responsibilities to the students, to mobilize the students to cooperate in a group, to use the values of the teacher-student relationship. student in the sense of a real dialogue (Iucu, 2006).

The character of the students is formed, developed and consolidated in a long process, and the school contributes decisively to the character formation, and has two possibilities to intervene constructively on the characters in training: through the prism of the curricular, formal activities, and through the non-formal activities.

The teacher-student relationship is the main method of didactic communication, it is a mutual, dynamic construction, and it is constantly adapted according to educational circumstances and purposes. The relationship with the students should not be confined to a formal, administrative aspect, regulated by deontological or normative codes, but will be personalized to the specific school group or its members. The democratic relationship favors the cooperation between teacher and student, the student is granted a certain credit, according to his degree of intellectual and spiritual maturation.

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THE PLACE OF OUTDOOR LEARNING ACTIVITIES IN THE ROMANIAN CORE PROCUREMENT CURRICULUM

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Abstract:*The educational systems are in search of teaching learning strategies that can make every day learning more efficient. Outdoor education is one of the modern strategies that was introduced in the daily routines of pupils, leading to behavioral changes and competency acquirements. In the Romanian educational systems, outdoor education can be found in the official educational documents and some teachers have introduced it in their daily routines. Still there are some questions about the theoretical and the practical place that it takes in the learning process. This research, is a brief analysis on the elements that can be found in the scholar curriculum, and belong to the outdoor educational field, at the core procurement level. The results are important because of the impact that is has on the educational practices at the level of the classroom. Teachers interested in this area can observe that the curriculum that is used in the Romanian schools supports outdoor education as a practice at all levels, especially at the core procurement level.*

Key words: *curriculum; outdoor learning; education; practice; content;*

Introduction

Teachers are constantly concerned about the criteria of choosing the perfect strategies to use in the instructional-educational process. Education is constantly developing and changing, and teachers need to keep up with social and educational updates. Trends are imposed both by the students, by their needs and interests, as well as by the society, by the demands they launch daily. These directions are also established by the management of the educational systems, local, national or international ones, through the policies with which they operate and the novelties they introduce into the curricula. These are translated by the concrete learning activities that are offered directly to the educators, by the contents and practices with which they operate.

Educators and teachers are the bridge between pupils and society, and they must streamline the educational process by getting to know the class of students, the traditional and modern educational strategies, adapting them to the needs of the group and by constantly updating their knowledge, training policies and styles. (Ciolan, 2008)

Theoretical foundation

The educator must be one step ahead, in terms of visualizing the components of the instructional-educational process, and to provide efficient and modern learning situations. This involves documentation, learning, adaptability, knowledge, but above all direct work with the class or group of students through permanent observation and analysis of the direction in which its development is required. A complete picture of the profile of the group of students must be made in order to provide a correct approach to learning. (Roman & Balaș)

The modern teacher will always be caught between the two major types of educational approach: the traditional one, well-organized and well-founded, stable and deeply researched that has been the basis of the educational systems for decades, and the modern, flexible one, based on interactive learning methods, on communication and development through the use of teamwork techniques. New results cannot be achieved using the same methods, and this is especially true when it comes to education. (Crețu, 1997)

In order to be able to make the most of the knowledge regarding the curriculum and its components, we propose for analysis the curriculum of core procurement cycle. This is necessary because we need to have a clear picture of the expectations, so that we can integrate outdoor activities, following closely the curricular principles.

Recent perspectives

Specificity of the preparatory class curriculum

Primary education is the first stage of compulsory education and its main objective is to create equal opportunities for all children, in order to achieve a balanced cognitive, emotional and psychomotor development, adapted to individual needs. The primary education comprises the preparatory class and classes I - IV, and the preparatory class is the first stage of the primary education. (M.E.N., 2017)

The preparatory class represents a period destined to accommodate the school life, a time that allows the students a good adaptation to the program, the community and the specific requirements of this diversified environment, in order to develop socio-emotional, intellectual and physical. From a socio-emotional point of view, the preparatory class supports the child to receive confidence in his own strengths, to increase his self-esteem, initiative and desire to succeed. The preparatory class is part of the general compulsory education having the role of preparing the student for the specific learning, first of all, of the first class, but also for the following years of school. The accommodation with the school environment is done in the friendliest way, the main method of learning being the game, as a predominant activity for the age of six years.

In the same register, it can be stated according to the Ministry of National Education that by going through the preparatory class, the intellect of each child develops, being prepared to be able to communicate better, to realize a constant intellectual effort, benefiting from different learning experiences. Also, this level prepares the conditions of a program according to the specific age of the students, in a stimulating environment, which leads to both physical and cognitive development of the children.

The relaxing environment is obtained by the fact that there is no notion of repetition neither after the preparatory class nor after 1st grade. It is the period in which measures are identified regarding prevention, compensation for inequalities manifested in students from disadvantaged environments at the beginning of schooling, early identification of learning difficulties and individualized intervention.

The evaluation is carried out continuously and, depending on the results recorded, it is immediately intervened throughout the school year, with the possibility of participating in the School after school program. In the preparatory class are enrolled the children who have reached the age of 6 until the beginning of the school year. At the written request of the parents, guardians or legal supporters, children from the age of 6 to the end of the calendar year, if their psychosomatic development is appropriate, can be enrolled in the preparatory class. (*** M.E.N., 2017)

The main directions of modernization of the Romanian curriculum are based on the analysis of the current curriculum and the education system, but also some European benchmarks, such as the qualifications framework and key competences. The OECD promotes the flexibility of the curriculum by personalizing the education and focusing on the student. These directions imply a good knowledge of the developmental needs of the student, depending on which educational approach is being built, as well as the use of teaching strategies that engage all the students in activity and that allow them to move on to the different needs and learning styles of each one. individually and independently.

The law of education in Romania no. 1/2011, art. 6, shows how the hours allocated to the school disciplines can be used, namely the program covering 75% of the teaching-evaluation hours, the other 25% being left at the teacher's disposal. The remaining time can be used for remedial learning, for children with special problems, for consolidating knowledge or for stimulating students capable of higher performance, according to individual learning plans elaborated for each student.

In 2013, the new programs appeared, which have a reformed structure, allowing the introduction in a single format of the three preparatory classes, class 1st and 2nd grades, for a better visualization and tracking of continuity and progress. at the level of skills and content. This presentation helps in a permanent connection with the previous and next classes, ensuring the coherence of the curriculum. Another element of novelty is the structuring of the content on specific fields of each discipline, which also show the continuity and progress from one year of study to another. The specific competences and the contents contained in the programs are closely correlated. The new program contains a more detailed presentation of the contents, in order to emphasize the elements on which the specific competences must be emphasized. (Egerău, 2005)

The curricular areas around which the contents are developed are: language and communication, mathematics and natural sciences, human and society, physical education, sports and health, arts, technologies and counseling and guidance. They are designated on the basis of principles and criteria of epistemological and psycho-pedagogical type. In each of the curricular areas presented, the contents will be realized with the most varied resources and in different types of activities, as attractive to children. For example, activity can be organized in simultaneous workshops, so that there is variety, so that those with a higher degree of difficulty can be better monitored and supervised. Outdoor education finds its place in organizing preparatory activities, the school curriculum encourages educational practices beneficial to educators, individually, but also as a group.

Analyzing the competencies described at this level, it can be observed that cooperation, socialization, exit and participation in activities in many and varied contexts is desirable at this level. In the document presented by specialists from the Ministry of National Education, it is found that in each of the areas, the emphasis is placed on the use of natural materials, the most familiar and open environments, the discovery of self and belonging to various social groups, the discovery of national identity and belonging to the environment of the city or village, manifestation of curiosity for phenomena, relationships, regularities in the immediate environment, manifestation of concern for a clean and friendly environment, etc. Problem solving, critical thinking, making observations or comparisons, are required to be carried out in a most natural and friendly environment, which offers countless natural resources. The discovery of sensations or emotions can be realized in the natural environment near the group room. Noticing the beauty of everyday life, participating in different racing games, identifying simple ways to maintain health status, in the familiar environment, are skills that are required to be developed at this age, using activities within outdoor education, and adapting the contents presented. in the natural environment, so that familiarizing students with this educational level will be easier and more efficient. (***Progresia competenţelor în Ciclul achiziţiilor fundamentale)

The elements presented above indicate the openness and motivation of the use of outdoor education with all its components, in order to form key competences and transversal competences at the level of the preparatory class. The basic idea of interdisciplinarity is that, on the one hand, the conceptual and methodological apparatus of several disciplines are used in interconnection, to examine a theme or a problem but, in particular, to develop integrated, transversal, key competences. and interdisciplinary. (Universitatea din București, 2013)

The teaching material suggested to be used in the proposed learning activities, is not mandatory. Learning activities are suggestions for skills training. They can be adapted to the specific of each class, depending on the resources available to each teacher. It should aim to make connections between disciplines, by offering learning contexts relevant to the everyday reality of the preparatory class student, which will keep him located in the familiar environment and which will be attractive, instructive and useful. (Dumitrescu, 2013)

At the end of the preparatory class, an evaluation report is made, in the form of a standard document, which records the level of achievement of the general competences, respectively of the specific competences associated with each discipline. The document is an integral part of the student's educational portfolio, and the purpose of its preparation is to guide and optimize the educational process, in order to prepare the students to respond to the school requests. The report is used to optimize the educational process and to substantiate the decisions of educational guidance and counseling, helping to create and update the individualized student learning plan.

The curriculum for the preparatory class marks the beginning of an unprecedented curricular modernization in Romania, with the elaboration of numerous curricular documents of a high quality and the continuation with the training of the teachers in this regard, by attending courses and seminars that offer them specializations in order to accumulate the competences of training at this level.

Level	**Competencies and activities extracted from the curriculum that are connected to outdoor education**
PREPARATORY CLASS	cooperation
	socialization
	use of natural materials
	discovery of self
	belonging to various social groups
	the discovery of national identity
	manifestation of curiosity for phenomena, relationships, regularities in the immediate environment
	manifestation of concern for a clean and friendly environment
	Problem solving
	critical thinking
	making observations or comparisons
	the discovery of sensations or emotions
	noticing the beauty of everyday life
	identifying simple ways to maintain health status

Table 1. Competencies and activities extracted from the curriculum that are connected to outdoor education in the preparatory class
Study of the curricular characteristics 1st grade

The second level of the fundamental acquisition cycle is 1st grade. At this level the students take part in school programs that make use of the learning experience accumulated up to the age of seven, including that of the preparatory class. For the children who did not graduate the preparatory class, there is no obstacle in the accumulation of knowledge, and then the development of skills. This is due to the fact that the evaluation is performed concentric and the contents are always repeated. It has been mentioned above that the first level of the cycle of fundamental acquisitions is intended for accommodation and socialization, in first grade, it can be observed according to the curricular analysis that it is the year of effective integration in the educational environment. As a novelty, the introduction of qualifiers as scoring conventions is observed.

There are elements of novelty brought also regarding the contents, in the sense that some content elements belonging to the curricular areas are already studied in the preparatory class, so they are given less time in the curriculum of 1st grade. At the same time, in the core procurement cycle, the focus is on communication, the students being able to communicate in various contexts. The open and friendly working atmosphere can also be created at this level through the use of modern teaching strategies, and the activities can be organized in a varied and fun way, in open spaces, using as much of the natural environment and its appealing elements. Also, the game and toys will be used as much, the students being asked to make their own resources used in the game and learning. Thus, it is possible to see the encouragement of the use of the elements of outdoor learning as well as the use of the elements of the natural environment.

The contents are introduced gradually, as in the preparatory class, using intuitive counting and support, in contexts of exploration of the environment close to and known to the student. The teaching game predominates, ensuring the active participation of the students. It is encouraged to explore the immediate environment, to ask questions, to verbal interventions, to express their ideas and experiences in relation to what they are learning and to propose solutions for solving problems.

It is preferable, whenever possible, to organize teaching sequences for observation, experimentation, measurement, data collection on various plants and animals, in the natural environment. Such holistic learning, close to the child's knowledge universe, has the advantage of being more interesting, in order to ensure a deeper understanding of the concepts. (***Anexa 7 la OMEN nr. 3371/12.03.2013, Metodologia privind aplicarea planurilor-cadru de învățământ pentru învățământul primar)

The current school programs promote experiential learning, by directly involving the student in the studied reality. The emphasis is placed on the realization of the knowledge, skills and values learned in real contexts, by increasing the weight of the activities of practical-applicative character within each school discipline. Skills training depends to a large extent on the way in which the teacher designs and organizes the learning and on the degree to which he emphasizes the applicative dimension of knowledge. (Dumitrescu, 2013)

Level	**Competencies and activities extracted from the curriculum that are connected to outdoor education**
1st grade	integration
	communication
	natural environment
	open spaces
	making own resources
	to verbal interventions
	exploration of the immediate environment
	expressing ideas and experiences in relation to what they are learning
	proposing solutions for solving problems
	observation, experimentation, measurement, data collection on various plants and animals in the natural environment
	holistic learning

Table 1. Competencies and activities extracted from the curriculum that are connected to outdoor education in 1st grade

The particularities of the curriculum at 2nd grade

2nd grade is the last level of the three belonging to the fundamental procurement cycle. Specifically, by the end of 2nd grade, the student's training profile is realized, and it is intended to be able to:

• to use various ways of communicating in real situations (by receiving and producing short and simple verbal and non-verbal messages in family contexts, using elementary components of the terminological conventions specific to the different school disciplines, interacting in familiar communication contexts in the mother tongue).

• to demonstrate creative thinking and the ability to adapt to various situations by showing curiosity for change, showing curiosity for engaging in focused and structured activities, for the type of projects proposed by the educator, showing curiosity for different forms of artistic expressivity, expressing artistic sensitivity by simple means.

• to enhance their own experiences in the investigation of the natural and social environment (by observing some elements from the near environment, by showing curiosity for phenomena in the near environment, by reporting some observed relationships in the near environment, by using simple procedures in solving problems, formulating explanations simple questions such as: When ?, How ?, Why ?, Formulation of simple opinions about objects / facts / phenomena in the environment).

By analyzing the skills needed for a student who has completed the 2nd grade, completing the cycle of fundamental acquisitions, one can observe the requirement of a dynamic, natural, open education, an education that is in permanent connection with the society and its members, but especially an education that is permanently concerned with the environment, natural areas, harmonious physical and cognitive development in the natural environment. We also observe the encouragement of self-discovery and relationships that are based on communication, sharing, discovery, experience, learning being holistic and especially interdisciplinary. The purpose of this level of education is to provide the conceptual, mental and behavioral bases that allow the child to adapt effectively to the next stage of schooling, but especially the social integration as quickly as possible. The skills can be accumulated more easily and faster if each teacher prepares the necessary space and resources for a modern learning, starting from the needs and interests of each child. This can be done mainly through the use of outdoor education activities.

At the end of this cycle of studies, an evaluation of the fundamental competences at national level is carried out, with subjects elaborated by the National Center for Evaluation and Examination, starting with an integrated test that is based on reading in Language and Communication, and then a test on Mathematics and Natural Sciences. The duration allocated to solving the subjects is 30 minutes for each test administered, and the place of the support is the classroom where the students normally carry out their daily activities. The obtained results are not recorded in the class catalog and they are used at the level of the educational unit by elaborating the individualized learning plans and by informing the parents about the stage of training and development of the competences that have been evaluated.

Level	**Competencies and activities extracted from the curriculum that are connected to outdoor education**
2nd grade	communication
	creative thinking
	experience
	self-discovery
	cognitive development
	sharing

Table 1. Competencies and activities extracted from the curriculum that are connected to outdoor education in 2nd grade

Conclusions

There are many questions that may arise from the desire to implement outdoor education or its activities in any educational system. It is necessary to thoroughly analyze the curriculum together with all its components for the three levels of the fundamental procurement cycle. It is important to know what we are working on and then we can make a correct intervention plan in order to adapt and transform the different activities pertaining to outdoor education, so that they are in line with the curricular requirements of the current period and the Romanian educational system.

Recent studies in the field of primary education have attracted the attention of specialists on the improvement of teaching methods and strategies, as well as of the activities carried out in the class of students. In the last period it is desired to renew the pedagogical methods, so that the learning becomes one that aims at the development of new skills. Thus, the teachers must organize their educational approach taking into account: curricular provisions, organizational strategies and teaching methodology.

Following the analysis of the curriculum for primary education, it is noted that it also includes the detail on curricular areas. Each area shows the internal structure of the discipline, orienting itself on certain competences, which include capacities and attitudes specific to the subject pursued. The contents are means by which the educational aims can be reached and are organized thematically, in units. The examples of learning activities start from the concrete experiences of the student and seek to integrate learning strategies appropriate to the learning situations. (Kelemen, 2014)

Modern education no longer distinguishes between the importance of some methods and the placement of others in inferior positions. Currently, education follows the way in which these methods are used to achieve the objectives. (Cerghit, 2006)

Outdoor education, whether used as a unique form of learning or as a learning strategy in traditional education, brings positive changes both in addressing learning styles and in how to adapt existing methods in various situations. The most common form of use of the outdoor approach is by using the methods already established and known in outdoor contexts. In this way, outdoor education becomes efficient and easy to use by every teacher, regardless of the age of the group they work with.

In outdoor education, both traditional learning methods and interactive methods that develop the level of group cohesion can be used. Depending on the objectives set, the number of participants, the aims and the chosen framework, it is possible to determine the methods that will be used, but also how they will be adapted, so that they correspond to the needs of the group and for the entire activity to lead to learning. (Torkos, 2017)

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PERCEIVED SOCIAL SUPPORT AND ANXIETY: A CORRELATIONAL ANALYSIS

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Abstract: *Exposure to a varied environment (associated with a reduced capacity for predictability or tolerance to social dynamics) can lead to anxiety for some individuals. In these situations, we look for recourses to overcome the dysfunctions generated by anxiety in the sense of increasing the degree of adaptability to the social environment. Perceived social support can be one of these resources. In this light, the current investigation has the objective to identify the relationship between perceived social support (i.e. Attachment, Social Integration, Reassurance of Worth, Reliable Alliance, Guidance, and Opportunity for Nurturance) and anxiety (i.e. Social Anxiety and Performance Anxiety). The sample consisted of 71 individuals (between 19 and 52 years, with an average age of M = 35.04, SD: 9.95) from Romania. Anxiety was measured with the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale and perceived social support with the Social Provisions Scale. Results highlighted the significant negative association between perceived social support and anxiety. The results of this study can offer relevant information to stimulate the reconsideration of social support in the reduction or prevention of the development of anxiety and can support educators or counselors who work with young individuals.*

Keywords: *Perceived social support; anxiety; social anxiety; performance anxiety.*

I. Introduction

Exposure to a varied environment (associated with a reduced capacity for predictability or tolerance to social dynamics) can lead to anxiety for some individuals. In these situations, we look for recourses to overcome the dysfunctions generated by anxiety in the sense of increasing the degree of adaptability to the social environment. Perceived social support can be one of these resources. That is why we chose to investigate the extent to which the level of perceived social support associates with the level of anxiety, conducted on a sample of 71 individuals.

From a psychopathological point of view, anxiety can manifest and can be described in three ways: 1. “feelings of an imminent danger, objectively determined, of an unspecified danger that would occur, a feeling that is accompanied by the elaboration of phantasms that amplify everything, raises the situation to the proportions of a drama; 2. an attitude of expectation in the face of a danger, which has the character of a true state of alert that invades the individual in its entirety and which is associated with the impression of an immediate catastrophe; 3. the belief of an absolute impossibility to act, to which the feelings of self disorganization and of the annihilation of self in front of the danger are associated” (Enăchescu, 2005, pg. 193).

We distinguish the feeling of fear from anxiety in the sense that the states felt in the case of anxiety have an incomprehensible character for the self and the surrounding individuals, a character given by the irrational specificity of the anxious states, whereas the simple state of fear can be associated with objective elements, being perceived by the self and the surrounding individuals with almost the same intensity (Enăchescu, 2005).

In the present study, from all dimensions of anxiety, we chose to investigate social anxiety. Social anxiety can be understood as being a fear of social interactions or a fear of reaching situations where the self might be judged, humiliated, offended or rejected by others (American Psychiatric Association, 2016; Moore, 2016). An important dimension of social anxiety refers to states of heightened mental discomfort, accompanied by unpleasant somatic manifestations, which the person experiences when he perceives that he is being evaluated by someone. We refer to specific situations of public speaking, of carrying out activities that involve the evaluation of someone (i.e. tests, artistic acts) or even usual activities such as talking in a small group, talking on the phone, eating in public places or sexual activity (Liebowitz, 1987; Heimberg et al., 1999; Khadhijah & Vijakurnamar, 2018). Synthetically, we refer to social anxiety as a fear of interacting with other individuals or of carrying out activities in the presence of other individuals.

Studies in literature have highlighted the link between social anxiety and various demographic factors such as age, gender, school preparation, belonging environment (Deb et al., 2010; Djinouand et al., 2016). A recent study highlighted differences in girls and boys according to the schools they attended (Khadhijah & Vijakurnamar, 2018). The findings of this study highlighted a high level of anxiety only in girls who attended a differentiated school by gender, but not to the boys who attended the same type of school.

Negative expectations of social performance, inefficient coping strategies and poor social skills were correlated with various levels of social anxiety and mediators linking social anxiety to poor relationships in the peer group. (Erath, Flanagan & Bierman, 2007). Other explored the link between social anxiety and self-esteem (Leary, 1990; Jong, 2002; Hraman et al., 2005) or between social anxiety and the use of the internet (Lee & Stapinsky, 2012).

Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale (Liebowitz, 1987) was tested to verify its validity for people with social anxiety disorder, highlighting its usefulness in establishing an accurate diagnosis and useful treatment for social anxiety. (Mennin et al, 2002; Fresco, 2001; Heimberg et al., 1999). Studies conducted in cultures different from the American one (i.e. Spanish culture) have led to the identification of a high validity of this scale for the evaluation of the social anxiety disorder, being performed statistical analyzes for both the social fear dimension and the one of avoidant behavior (Olivares, Sanchez-Garcia & Lopez-Pina, 2009). A study developed in Turkey, on a sample of individuals with social anxiety disorder, generalized anxiety disorder and individuals without pathological manifestations identified a high reliability of this scale for achieving a good differential diagnosis regarding this type of anxiety disorder, i.e. social anxiety (Soykan, Özgüven & Gençöz, 2003).

Initially structured on two subscales (i.e. fear of avoiding situations of social interaction and performing an action while being observed), the Leibowitz scale supports nuances in terms of the factors that explain and define social anxiety disorder. "The common analysis of exploring the entangled factors of fear and avoidance assessment revealed four similar factors for each: (1) social interaction, (2) public speaking, (3) observation by others, and (4) eating and drinking in public, which demonstrated convergence and discriminative validity with other instruments for measuring social anxiety. These findings suggest that there are four global categories of social fear assessed by the Social Anxiety Scale and that although social interaction anxiety appears to be unifactorial, fear of performance/ observation may be multifactorial" (Safern et al., 1999, pg. 253).

As regards to social support, in the APA Dictionary of Psychology it is represented as „the provision of assistance or comfort to others, typically to help them cope with biological, psychological, and social stressors. Support may arise from any interpersonal relationship in an individual's social network, involving family members, friends, neighbors, religious institutions, colleagues, caregivers, or support groups. It may take the form of practical help (e.g., doing chores, offering advice), tangible support that involves giving money or other direct material assistance, and emotional support that allows the individual to feel valued, accepted, and understood".

To measure the degree of social support we used the Social Provisions Scale (Russell & Cutrona, 1987), that has within its competence six subscales of social support: Attachment, Social Integration, Reassurance of Worth, Reliable Alliance, Guidance and Opportunity for Nurturance proposed by Weiss (apud Perera, 2015). The scale was used to study the perceived social support in the evaluation of individuals with physical disorders (Chiu, Moti, Ditchman, 2016). It was used in correlation with well-being, with self-esteem (Yarcheski, Mahon, Yarcheski, 2001, 2003) or with perceived loneliness in adolescence (Damsteegt, 1992); It was also used to study how coping influences stress (Hardy, Richman, Rosenfeld, 1991). The scale was proven to be valid for the evaluation of close relationships in adulthood (Mancini, Blieszner, 1992), and the construct validity was studied and demonstrated by Perera in his investigation conducted in 2015 on a sample of 376 young individuals.

In literature, social support was studied in relation to social anxiety as well. Meaningful correlations were identified for some dimensions such as: social anxiety with social support and self-concealment and from social support to commitment, exploration, and self-concealment. (Potoczniak, Aldea, DeBlaere, 2007). Results of hierarchical multiple regression analyses in a study from 2010 (Wonderlich-Tierney, Vander Wal) „indicated that higher levels of social support are associated with a weaker association between social anxiety and eating disorder symptomatology". A study conducted on young individuals diagnosed with depression and/ or anxiety revealed that „Social anxiety did not have a significant indirect effect on suicidal ideation through perceived social support from either parents or close friends" (Gallagher et al. 2014).

II. Objective and hypothesis

The aim of this present study is to identify the relationship between perceived social support (i.e. Attachment, Social Integration, Reassurance of Worth, Reliable Alliance, Guidance, and Opportunity for Nurturance) and anxiety (i.e. Social Anxiety and Performance Anxiety), as well as the extent to which they are represented in persons from the Romanian population. The objective was established as a result of the empirical findings regarding the attitude of the individuals towards their own existence, towards the stable goals for their personal and professional development in the European social context, characterized by an accentuated dynamic at social, educational and professional level. Also in this context we are interested in the level of anxiety felt by people from the perspective of performance - understood as an activity performed in the presence of others, as well as from the perspective of establishing social contacts.

2.1. Hypotesis

There will be a negative correlation between the levels of perceived social support (i.e. Attachment, Social Integration, Reassurance of Worth, Reliable Alliance, Guidance and Opportunity for Nurturance) and the levels of anxiety (i.e. Social Anxiety and Performance Anxiety).

III. Methods

3.1. Participants

The sample is one of availability (randomly selected), consisting of 71 individuals, aged between 19 and 52 years, with an average age of M = 35.04 (SD = 9.95). In terms of gender distribution, the sample is unbalanced, with the female gender representing larger numbers (N = 59), compared to the male gender (N = 12). The majorities of the respondents are graduates of higher education or were attending college. Responses were collected through the Google Forms platform. The participants of this study were asked to respond as sincerely as possible to the statements of the instruments and were informed that they are participating in a research on social support and the presence of anxiety. Also, the participants were assured of the confidentiality of the data.

3.2. Instruments

For the assessment of anxiety, the Liebowitz Social Anxiety Scale (Liebowitz, 1987) was used which consists of two subscales, i.e. Social Anxiety and Performance Anxiety. The instrument is comprised of 24 items, on a 4-point Likert scale, measuring the fear level, ranging from 0 (Not at all) to 3 (Severe), and the avoidance level, ranging from 0 (Never) to 3 meaning (Usually) (Liebowitz, 1987). In this study, the simple translation was used, which can be found online for public usage.

For the assessment of the perceived social support, the Social Provisions Scale (Russell & Cutrona, 1987) was used which consists of six subscales, i.e. Attachment, Social Integration, Reassurance of Worth, Reliable Alliance, Guidance and Opportunity for Nurturance. The instrument is comprised of 24 items, on a 4-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (total disagreement) to 4 (total agreement) (Russell & Cutrona, 1987). In this study, the simple translation was used, which can be found online for public usage.

Both scales were taken for the purpose of carrying out this study from researchcentral.ro, without having the status of validated instruments on the Romanian population.

3.3. Design and procedure

Data collection took place in June, 2019, and completing the questionnaire package took approximately 30 minutes for each participant.

For the verification of the proposed hypothesis, a correlational design was used, having as dependent variables the level of perceived social support (i.e. Attachment, Social Integration, Reassurance of Worth, Reliable Alliance, Guidance and Opportunity for Nurturance) and the level of anxiety (i.e. Social Anxiety and Performance Anxiety).

IV. Results

The data were processed using SPSS version 17, and to determine the type of statistical procedures used later in this study, the normality distribution with the Shapiro-Wilk test was calculated for each variable (Table 1).

Tabel 1. Shapiro-Wilk test for the perceived social support and anxiety

Variables	Statistic	df.	Sig.
Social support	**.82**	**71**	**< .01**
Attachment	.58	71	< .01

Social Integration	.85	71	< .01
Reassurance of Worth	.88	71	< .01
Reliable Alliance	.63	71	< .01
Guidance	.62	71	< .01
Opportunity for Nurturance	.85	71	< .01
Anxiety	**.97**	**71**	**> .05**
Performance Anxiety	.97	71	> .05
Social Anxiety	.96	71	< .05

As can be observed in Table 1, the variables that did not respect a normal distribution of data are: Social Support (global score), Attachment, Social Integration, Reassurance of Worth, Reliable Alliance, Guidance, Opportunity for Nurturance and Social Anxiety.

Tabel 2. Mean values and standard deviations for social support and anxiety

Variables	N	Mean	Standard deviation
Social support	**71**	**3.61**	**.40**
Attachment	71	3.74	.51
Social Integration	71	3.52	.50
Reassurance of Worth	71	3.45	.52
Reliable Alliance	71	3.66	.62
Guidance	71	3.66	.64
Opportunity for Nurturance	71	3.64	.37
Anxiety	**71**	**1.31**	**.79**
Performance Anxiety	71	1.38	.77
Social Anxiety	71	1.24	.85

Due to the fact that the null hypothesis (which states that the distribution on the scales will be normal; Table 1) for the majority of the variables been rejected, the Spearman correlation test will be used. Therefore, to verify whether there is a negative association relationship between the perceived social support and anxiety, the Spearman correlation will be used (Table 3).

Tabel 3. Speraman correlation between perceived social support and anxiety

	Anxiety	
Social Support	**-.53****	
	Performance Anxiety	Social Anxiety
Attachment	-.25*	-.27*
Social Integration	-.40**	-.35**
Reassurance of Worth	-.51**	-.52**
Reliable Alliance	-.36**	-.32**
Guidance	-.40**	-.41**
Opportunity for Nurturance	-.28*	-.24*

As it can be observed in table 3, the majority of the correlations were significant at a $p < .01$ level, except for Attachment with Performance Anxiety, Attachment with Social Anxiety, Opportunity for Nurturance with Performance Anxiety and Opportunity for Nurturance with Social Anxiety (these correlations were significant a $p < .05$ level).

V. Discussions and conclusions

Through this study we aimed to highlight the correlation between perceived social support and social anxiety. Statistical analysis highlighted the significant negative correlation between most dimensions of the two instruments. It is thus highlighted that people who perceive a high level of social integration, value assurance, trust alliance and guidance will have a lower level of performance anxiety and social anxiety. The feeling of trust and the awareness of one's own value, as well as that of belonging, are characteristics that ensure the maintenance of a low level of anxiety.

The results of this study can offer relevant information to stimulate the reconsideration of social support when necessary to reduce or prevent the installation of anxiety and can support educators or counselors who work with young individuals. Analyzing the social network of one individual, the particularities of the social relationships, the sentimentality of their own values, the confidence that one individual has in himself and in others are important aspects that can be addressed in the counseling of the persons who face anxiety problems.

5.1. Limits

The lack of the homogeneity and the reduced numbers of the participants (N = 71) do not allow an extension of the results on certain categories of age, gender or professional category. Therefore future studies on homogeneous groups could provide more useful information in structuring a more relevant image on the specifics of social support and anxiety in different categories of population.

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THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHERS' HOLISTIC APPROACH TO WORKING WITH CHILDREN WITH BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS

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Abstract: *Today's modern school, globalization and the development of technology, bring great challenges, not only for teachers, but for the whole society. Problems in children's behavior are a serious social and psychological problem. People who follow children's development and want them to change are those who are constantly improving, applying the key concepts of holistic education, until they see the change.*

The purpose of this paper is to highlight the importance of a holistic approach, in which the teacher is not only an educator but also a companion and a facilitator, one that helps and facilitates the learning process (Farbes, 1996). It is important that we monitor the child's development from all aspects. Encouraging children for positive development and creativity, seeing them as decision makers in their environment, are just some of the elements of applying holism.

Key words*: undesirable behaviors; holistic approach; prevention of behavior;*

ZNAČAJ HOLISTIČKOG PRISTUPA UČITELJA U RADU SA DECOM SA PROBLEMIMA U PONAŠANJU

Abstract: *Današnja savremena škola, globalizacija i razvoj tehnologije, nose velike izazove, ne samo za učitelje, već i za čitavo društvo. Problemi u ponašanju dece predstavljaju ozbiljan socijalni i psihološki problem. Osoba koja prati razvoj dece i želi njihovu promenu je osoba koja se konstantno usavršava, primenjuje ključne koncepte holističke edukacije, sve dok ne vidi promenu.*

Namera ovog rada je da ukaže na značaj holističkog pristupa, u kome je nastavnik ne samo edukator već drug i fasilitator, onaj koji pomaže i olakšva proces učenja (Farbes, 1996). Važno je pratiti razvoj deteta sa svih aspekata. Podsticati decu na pozitivan razvoj i kreativnost, posmatrati ih kao donosioce odluka u svom okruženju, samo su neki od elemenata primene holizma.

Key words*: nepoželjna ponašanja; holistički pristup; prevencija ponašanja;*

Introduction

One of the current problems today is children who exhibit problematic behavior. There is a growing number of researchers that have been addressing this issue. Governments and schools are taking the necessary precautionary and intervention measures.

The teacher, together with parents, monitors the growth and development of students. Statistics show us that more and more children and young people exhibit problematic behavior. From the age of 3 to 5, the problems that children exhibit, even aggression, are often invisible to the parents, ascribing them to the child's hyperactive phase. However, behavioral problems begin to become visible and escalate in elementary school age. Behind problematic behavior is always the repressed emotion, anger, fury, sadness that the teacher or parent must listen to and recognize. Other forms of inappropriate behavior such as fights, disinterest in attending, irregular attendance, skipping school, or consuming psychoactive substances are all a call for response.

"If violence is part of the child's everyday life at school, the child will adopt violence as a way of life and values related to violence as personal values" (Popadić, Plut and Pavlović, 2014, p.24).

The teacher does not have a magical solution, but he/she is the person who has the power to create a positive climate in his/her class. Working with children and young people promotes the unconditional and full respect for the fundamental rights and interests of children as defined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child[28]. Acceptance and understanding opens the door to change; by taking care of the lasting interest of children, we are taking the initiative to change behavior and therefore their future (Stevanović & Marković, 2014).

By applying the holistic approach, the teacher directs the children to get to know themselves, their potentials, take responsibility for themselves and their environment. Looking at the child as a whole, the teacher cultivates the spirituality and values of each child.

Miller (2005) states that the rise of holistic education in the last 25 years has been positive and that an increasing number of people in many parts of the world are embracing this worldview. An increasing number of Waldorf and Montessori schools show that parents and teachers are interested in this type of education, "that is, teaching and learning methods that are in line with the natural rhythms of human development" (Miller, 2005, p.5).

Terminological definition

The law on juvenile offenders and the job description of institutions dealing with children use the formulations - juveniles with behavioral problems and juveniles in conflict with the law. Our law identifies a child under 14 and a minor under 18 (Stevanović, 2013) so the children with behavioral problems are 0-14 years old, and juveniles with behavioral problems and in conflict with the law are 0-

[28]Convention on the Rights of the Child, november 1989, Geneva

18 years old.Only corrective measures can be imposed on children under 14 when it comes to the implementation of the Law on Juvenile Criminal Offenders[29].

According to the International Classification of Diseases ICD-10 (*WHO, 1992)* or DSM-V (APA, 2013), behavioral disorders are characterized by the persistent and pervasive presence of patterns of antisocial, aggressive and challenging behavior *(ICD-10: Classification of mental and behavioral disorders: clinical descriptions and diagnostic guidelines, WHO, 1992).*[30]

"The definition of behavioral disorder implies all behavioral phenomena, biological, psychological and social genesis that go beyond generally accepted norms of behavior" (Stevanović, 2013, p.7).

The group of authors (V. Kovacević, T. Dobrenović, V. Podlugar) emphasize in their research that behavioral disorders represent behaviors that are "significantly different from the usual behavior of the majority" (Uzelac, 1995, p.36).

Stevanović (2013) states that the term "children with behavioral problems" is used by practitioners as the most comprehensive, and it can include children who violate legal norms and those whose behavior is not punishable by law but is defined as antisocial, as well as abuse of psychoactive substances, runaways (p.3). The term "antisocial behavior", synonymous with unwanted behavior, is behavior that is contrary to social and moral norms (Šaljić, 2014, p.7).

Ilić (2000) states that three stages of social behavior disorders are most often mentioned: the first stage is characterized by frustration, disobeying orders and rules, the need for emotional dependence, the occurrence of negative reaction towards parents, opposing authority, skipping classes, intolerance towards friends and the like. There may also be a lack of concentration, attention, anything that causes inappropriate behavior.The second stage usually consists of negative reaction towards parents, which then gets transferred to school, to teachers, there is then disobedience to authority, tendencies to meet needs outside the parental home, first offenses, thefts, tendency to take alcohol and other psychoactive substances, and so on. In the third stage, we can see that aggressive habits in various groups and interactions, the destruction of objects and the tendency to commit crimes have already been substantially formed (p.80).

Previous studies

Research in Serbia indicates that caring for children remains primarily the mother's responsibility (Mihić, ZotovićandPetrović, 2006). According to a survey by the Center for Social Work (CSW), in 2017, a total of 19,829 juveniles with behavioral problems and juveniles in conflict with the law were recorded, of which

[29]Lawon Juvenile Criminal Offendersand Criminal Protection of Juveniles.
[30]The international Classification of Diseases-ICD, WHO, https://icd.who.int/browse10/2016/en
Here translate das MCD: medical classification of diseases by theWorld Health Organization. The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, APA-American Psychiatric Association:Diagnosticand Statistical Manual of the American Psychiatric Society.

16,412 were juveniles over 14 with criminal liability, and 3,417 were children under 14 without criminal liability. Of that number, in 2017, a total of 1,270 children under the age of 14 committed a crime. In terms of gender, boys dominate with 82%. Parents in Serbia apply physical punishment in 25% of cases in young children (1-2 years), while this type of disciplining is used much less often in older age (10-14 years), namely, in 8% of cases[31] (*Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2017*).

Chart 1. The number of children under 14 who are criminals works in the period 2013-2017. (*chart taken from the survey Children in the Social Welfare System, Republic Institute for Social Welfare, Serbia, 2017*)

We can see in the chart that the number of children who committed crimes in the period 2013 -2017. increased on an annual basis, in 2013 there were 791 children, while in 2017. there were 1270 children.The most common obstacles faced by parents of children experiencing behavioral problems are poverty[32], unemployment or low-level employment that is incompatible with educational degree, family disintegration, moral decay, inadequate use of free time and inefficient education systems. According to the Network of Organizations for Children of Serbia (MODS, 2017), one third of children are at risk of poverty as one of the factors contributing to the problem.

Psychology and other humanities recognize children at risk as a vulnerable group of children. In most cases, these are children from socially marginalized groups, children from disadvantaged socio-economic families, children with disabilities, children without parental care, and children from single-parent families.

Lower socioeconomic status of families is associated with lower maternal affection in the educational approach to children, as well as with more present parental conflicts (Zotović, 2007). A major meta-analysis looked at family factors that correlated with behavioral problems and identified four major contributing groups: 1. Neglect (parents spend insufficient time with their children, especially fathers); 2. Presence of conflict (the presence of conflict, between parents and children, as well as between children and between parents); 3. Violent or criminogenic parental-educational figures; 4. Instability and sudden unwanted changes (domestic violence, marital strife, divorce, illness and death (Loeber and Stouthamer-Loeber, 1986, according to: Radojević, 2015, p.6).

When it comes to research focused on the study of parenting disciplines, they are mainly focused on physical punishment (Najdanović-Tomović, 1996; Ćorović, 2012, according to: Isaković, 2017, p.230) and encouraging legal prohibition of this

[31]Republic Institute for Social Protection http://www.zavodsz.gov.rs/media/1233/deca-u-sistemu-socijalne-zastite-u-2017.pdf accessed on June 2019.

[32]According to the Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) children are most exposed to the risk of poverty (30,0%).

form of parenting by parents (Ljubojev, 2004; Stevanović and Srna, 2010, according to: Isaković, 2017, p.230).

According to UNICEF (2017), 44% of boys and 42% of girls under the age of 14 have suffered physical punishment at home. Most children, 65%, report the violence to their parents first, statistics further show that a relatively small but worrying percentage, 14 to 17% of children, do not discuss their experiences when it comes to violence (Harris et al.,2002; Naylor, Cowie, & DelRey, 2001: according to Gross, 2002).

All consequences of violence equally affect children and their mental and physical development.

Most common risk factors

The behavior of the child is the result of individual and social factors. Individual characteristics of the child, parental style of upbrining, family conditions and school environment all have a dominant influence on the development of problematic behavior in children.

Significant factors on which an individual's development depends are:

Personality structure **-** development depends on the activity of the individual, so we could say that the development of psychological life and the degree of development of psychological functions and traits depend on: the heritage, the environment and the activity of the individual. The American psychologist Watson used to say, “Give me a dozen healthy infants, well-formed, and my own specified world to bring them up in and I'll guarantee to take any one at random and train him to become any type of specialist I might select – doctor, lawyer, artist, merchant-chief and, yes, even beggar-man and thief, regardless of his talents, penchants, tendencies, abilities, vocations, and race of his ancestors” (Rot, 1969, p.65).

Family influence **-** the family is a key factor in child development. The role of the family is very important in the first years of each child's life. Parenting styles are of primary importance. The type of family a child will grow up in will certainly influence his or her development. Longitudinal studies have shown that inadequate parental supervision, lack of attention and discipline based on physical punishment result in abusive behavior by children (Farington, Justicia et. al., 2006: according to Šaljić, p.2014).

We have witnessed that some studies indicate that children without parental care who came to permanent care after 6 months of age exhibited increased levels of anxiety, behavioral problems, insecurity. Most research shows that if a child has not formed an adequate attachment to his/her foster parents within 12 months, the risk of difficulty in socialization increases (Howe, 1998). Family influence, degree of parental involvement, supervision of the child, the way the child handles conflicts and very often inconsistent or harsh disciplining are the most common risk factors (Patterson et al. 1989).

School influence - the school systematically extends and develops the process of intellectual, emotional and social development started in the family. Starting school is about coming to a new environment, with newer requirements and relationships compared to those the child had in the family. Rot (1969) states that, in addition to the curriculum, the organization of school life and the teachers' personalities have a significant influence on the development of certain personality traits.The teacher and the parent are role models for the child and their relationships and actions are of great importance for the child's growth.

Impact of peer environment - social environment is of great importance for the development of psychic life. Some environments encourage their development more then others. It often seems that an environment that is the same for different individuals, say, two children, even though they are children of the same parents and live in the same family, does not imply that they have the same environment. Parents' relationships may vary (Rot, 1969, p.69). Same with the peer environment, the relationship between peers can be positive and negative, which significantly affects children's behavior in the environment. Behavioral causes may lie in beliefs and attitudes (Wasserman et al. 2003). They are formed in childhood, but especially escalate in a peer environment. When it comes to beliefs, they form prejudices and stereotypes, thus causing problems in communication and inappropriate behavior among children.

Impact of socio-economic factors **-** despite the numerous theories about the emergence of behavioral problems, the prevailing view today is that destructiveness and antisocial behaviors come from the primary learned behavior, observational learning, imitation, try-out and repetition (Bandura, Barou, Montagu, Huesmann).

Mass media - media as a form of mass communication can have both positive sides and negative effects, depending on the programs that are presented to the children. The media has become an integral and inevitable part of the educational process. "People's connection or dependence on the media has also produced some psychopathological phenomena, such as the growing dependence of young people on the media, spending too much time on the computer, video games, television, and the like" (Suzić, 2005, p.60).

The role of the school in the prevention of problematic behavior of children

Today's modern school faces some great social challenges. The development of technology and digitization in a globalized society comes with it more complex requirements. School is a social institution whose activity is not only to educate students, but also to prepare them to apply and incorporate the knowledge they have acquired. School plays a major role when it comes to preventing problematic behavior. The Law on the Fundamentals of the Education System, as well as the General and Special Protocols adopted within each school, oblige us to prevent and intervene and to put a stop to problematic behavior of children (Bašić, 2009).

Preventive measures and activities also include thematic prevention programs, prevention of the development of phenomena such as violence, drug addiction, aggression, etc. They are aimed at improving students' knowledge and awareness of various forms of behavioral disorders (Žunić-Pavlović et al., 2010).

Important subjects for the realization of educational work are teachers, as a key factor on which the quality of education depends. Therefore, constant teacher development[33], counseling and support by professional associates in the school, i.e. psychologists and pedagogists, are needed.

Teachers' professional competences are combinations of knowledge, cognitive and practical skills, as well as attitudes and values that a teacher can use in the course of his / her professional activities (Gonzales & Wagenaar, 2008).

Holistic education

Holism (from ὅλοςholos, a Greek word meaning all, entire, total) implies holistic education based on theories of holism. The holistic education movement started with the emergence of alternative pedagogies, characteristic of the early 20th century. There are many philosophical and practical derivatives of the holistic learning theory, however, one unifying principle is that everything in the world (or in the universe) is interconnected (Clark, 1991. according to Johnson, 2006). The key concepts of holistic education are: connectedness, wholeness and existence.

By applying the holistic approach, the teacher develops intellectual, emotional, social, physical, artistic, creative and spiritual development in children.Children develop holistically, which means they need support in terms of “health, nutrition, care, protection, early stimulation and learning” (Tran, 2013, p.2). Maria Montessori stated: “Follow the child!”Following the child is the real beginning of a holistic education (Montessori 1963, p.69-70).

Swiss humanitarian Johann Pestalozzi, American Transcendentalists Thoreau, Emerson and Alcott, founders of progressive education - Francis Parker and John Dewey, and pioneers such as Maria Montessori and Rudolf Steiner, among others, insisted that education should be understood as a skill in developing the moral, emotional, physical, psychological and spiritual dimensions of a developing child. Holistic education is based on the premise that each person finds its identity, meaning and purpose in life through connection with community, the natural world, and spiritual values such as compassion and peace.

Comenius (1592-1670) was an advocate of the outdoor world and his work took a holistic approach to learning, he believed that children learned through their senses(Joyce, 2012). Froebel's approach emphasized that children should show love and respect for nature from their early age, that by doing so technology will not spoil them (Joyce, 2012).

In psychology, Gestaltism is an example of a holistic approach.Holism in the Gestalt approach emphasizes that change in one part leads to change in the whole, and likewise – change in the whole leads to change in its parts.

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[33]According to the *Rule book oncontinuous professional development andacquisition of thetitle of teachers, educators and professional associates* (2012), prevention of violence, abuse and neglect, prevention of discrimination, communication skills; streng the ning the professional capacities of employees, especially in the field of innovative teaching methods; as well as working with parents and students (Article 8).

The importance of applying the holistic approach to working with children with behavioral problems

In order for the educational outcomes of the school to be favorable, it is necessary to create a positive climate in the class on a daily basis (Zlatković, 2014; Hunter 2008). In addition to the structural characteristics of the class (class size, student heterogeneity in the class, physical space), the positive climate in the class is also influenced bythe following principles: 1. Embracing diversity; 2. Mutual relationships and appreciation; 3. Setting clear rules and expectations; 4. Setting clear goals at the beginning of each teaching unit; 5. Assertive behavior toward students (Zlatković, 2014, p.164-166).

Behind the problematic behavior of children are: the lack of attention, aggression, rejection, denial, indiscipline. Teachers are expected to reach every student. They are encouraged to use preventative strategiesat the classroom level, one of them being overcorrection. It includes "identifying the context of student misbehavior, clearly specifying alternative behavior and modifying situation" (Vulfolk, Hjuz & Volkap, 2012, p.64).

The holistic approach to teaching depends not only on the instructions, but also on the sensitivity of the lecturer, the communication relations between the teacher and the student.

Children who exhibit behavioral problems lack attention, need to be animated and pointed out to the importance of analyzing a teaching unit, invited to actively participate.

Interactive teaching units, division of responsibilities regarding preparation, as well as grouping and planning extracurricular activities are guidelines that contribute to developing each child's skills.The reinforcement program based on Skinner's (Skinner 1904-1990) learning (a key concept of behaviorism) is a primary process that shapes and controls behavior, and takes place in both positive and negative ways. Positive reinforcement is the reinforcement of behavior by a positive stimulus (praise after the behavior), while negative reinforcement is the reinforcement of behavior by eliminating or avoiding some aversive events.

The art of holistic education lies in its response to different styles and needs. By respecting differences and refusing to label children, holistic teachers discover each child's particularity (Miller, 2005).

During the class, the teaching content is very important, it includes everything that the teacher and the students deal with, so even deviation from the teaching topic due to the need to discuss student difficulties or solve disciplinary problems falls within theclass content (Meyer, 2002).

Cognitive-behavioral approach, behavioral analysis similar to self-assessment, is very important. It is necessary for the teacher to implement different programs of learning social competencies, e.g. programs that include a range of skills, knowledge, role-playing: anger management exercises, self-perception and self-assessment exercises, self-verbalisation, conflict resolution, mediation, assertiveness instead of aggression,and the like.

Pestalozzi (1746-1827) believed that children's learning should be in line with nature (Joyce, 2012). He also advocated an atmosphere of love, acceptance and appreciation of the child's needs, abilities and interests as a basis for developing a healthy and accomplished personality. Pestalozzi starts from the understanding that the basic goal of education should be to develop all the strengths and abilities of a person,thus contributing to the moral realization of the person itself.

Apart from working with students, one of the important factors is cooperation with parents.[34]

Parent-teacher monitoring is more intense once the child's problematic behavior is noted. Only by reciprocal action can a positive result be achieved.

Vrkić, Dimić and Vidić (2015, p.112) emphasize the importance of applying the holistic approach through correlation with other subjects.Teamwork is one of the most significant forms of teaching. Through teamwork, the child learns to be a part of the group, express his / her opinion, participate, exchange ideas and creativity, develop communication skills.

Conclusions

Good practice examples show that each child's free time should be structured and organized in a quality manner.Teachers need to develop a positive relationship with students and parents. A positive relationship and cooperation also depend on mutual relationships at school. It is necessary to build trust, understanding and appreciation of every person. Trust helps the student seek help and communicate openly. Otherwise, if there is misunderstanding and poor quality of the teacher-student relationship, the attitude towards the teacher, school achievements, regularity of attendance, behavior, etc. can be adversely affected.Continuous school development is needed in order to prepare new generations for the uncertainty of the postmodern age, to prepare teachers to be willing to accept risks, deal with unpredictable situations, and be ready for possible changes (Stoll & Fink, 2000).

The holistic approach opens many topics for contemplation, inviting us to have a transformative dialogue and solve problems through an alternative approach. It is important to be willing to apply innovative ideas and to fulfill the technical requirements in schools for this type of teaching. Behavior problems in students have different forms, each person manifests them differently, it is important for the teacher to support, empathize and be in constant touch with children and parents. Cooperation with the professional service and the local community, as well as information on support and re-socialization programs available for children with behavioral problems, are of great importance.

[34] According to the *Lawon Foundations of Educational System*, a parent council is formed in our schools,consisting of one parent of a studentfrom each class (Article 58.).The Parent Council hasits representatives within the teaching staff when it comes to development planning, and parents canbe in volvedin the work of teams that are formed to accomplish a specifict ask, program or project (Article 66).

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A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS BETWEEN THE PERCEPTIONS AND ATTITUDES OF STUDENTS IN TWO HIGH SCHOOLS WITH DIFFERENT STATUS REGARDING THE PHENOMENON OF BULLYING IN SCHOOLS

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Abstract: *Bullying is described as a set of aggressive actions, characterized by intent, repetition and an imbalance of forces. These characteristics refer to the fact that the aggressor chooses a weaker victim, who will be aggressively and repeatedly assaulted, usually in school. Wanting to explore this topic locally through the eyes of the students, we conducted a research to identify the differences in perception and attitude of the students from two different high schools (a national college and a technological high school), regarding this phenomenon. The main hypothesis is that tensions and difficulties in the school environment can affect the attitudes of students regarding violence. We applied a questionnaire to 72 students (36 from each high school) from Sighetu Marmatiei. The results show that the students from the technological high school, know more information about bullying, and they consider this phenomenon to be less frequent compared to the students from the national college, and the feeling of being safe at school is greater. Students from both high schools expressed pro-victim attitudes to a greater extent, but the attitude toward the aggressor was more negative in the case of students from the national college and more positive in the other school. We can conclude that if the academic standards of the students are higher, there is more tension is the school atmosphere, which can generate bullying situations and feelings of insecurity at school.*

Keywords: *bullying; school violence; student perception; combat and prevention.*

Introduction

A national study conducted by Save the Children (2016) shows that 17% of 11-year-olds have acknowledged that they bullied other students at least three times in the previous month, the percentage of 13- and 15-year-olds, respectively, being 23%. The data revealed that:

•1 in 4 children was repeatedly humiliated at school, in front of their colleagues;

•1 in 6 children was repeatedly beaten;
•1 in 5 children repeatedly humiliates another child at school;
•3 out of 10 children are excluded from the group of colleagues;
•73% of the children witnessed bullying in the school environment.

Bullying is a set of aggressive actions that usually take place within the school; this phenomenon appears to be universal and can be observed in almost all classrooms (Smith and Brain, 2000; Gini, 2006). In short, bullying is an aggressive behavior, manifested through a set of negative actions that aim to cause physical or emotional distress to one or more students who are unable to defend themselves. (Olweus, 1993; Sanders and Phye, 2004; Protogerou and Flisher, 2012; Gavrila-Ardelean, 2017)

Intent, repetition and an unbalance of forces are three components without which we cannot speak of bullying. First of all, the abuser intentionally and knowingly harms the victim. The aggressive behaviors are repetitive over time (Gavrila-Ardelean, 2014). A child attacked by another or by an entire group, will be targeted several times. This feature of repetitiveness is the basis of the victims' anxiety, for which the anticipation of an aggressive incident becomes as problematic as the bullying itself (Hymel and Swearer, 2008). Bullying involves an imbalance of forces between the aggressor and the victim, where the victim is unable to defend himself/herself, being either outnumbered, smaller or weaker, from a physical point of view, or less psychologically resistant. If there is a conflict between two "equal" people in terms of force, we are not talking about bullying. This is important because the effects of constant and repeated attacks by a stronger person or a group against which it is impossible to defend yourself, differs from the effects of an attack of a person with equal strength. (Rigby, 2003)

Less recognized are the social forms of power. A person may have an advantage over the other in terms of greater academic or athletic ability, or social status or greater popularity within the group. Defending from these aggressors with social power is more complicated.

Research shows that many bullies actually have high levels of social skills and social intelligence. (Hymel and Swearer, 2008; Smith and Brain, 2000)

By its nature, bullying is likely to have particular characteristics (such as the victim's fear of telling what happens) and particular outcomes (such as developing low self-esteem and depression in the victim). The victim's lack of defense also implies an obligation for others to intervene (Smith and Brain, 2000). Defending a victim can be considered a moral action, because it aims to protect the victim's welfare and rights. (Thornberg, Pozzoli, Gini, and Jungert, 2015)

A pioneer in school bullying, Dan Olweus (1993) highlighted three types of bullying: physical (through kicks, bruises, pinching), verbal (through insults, teasing, nicknames) and emotional / psychological (by excluding someone from a group, hiding personal things, manipulations) (Netzelmann, Steffan, and Angelova, 2016). Further, bullying behaviors can be classified according to their degree of openness: direct and indirect. The direct forms refer to an interaction between the aggressor and the victim, (forms of verbal / physical violence), while indirect bullying refers to hidden actions that affect the victim without a direct relation, such as social isolation, spreading rumors, etc. (Sanders and Phye, 2004; Gini, 2006; Beldean-Galea, Mireştean, Irimie, Samoilă, Sandu, and Rusz, 2016)

Also, in the last decade, since digital communication has become an important part of the social life of young people and even children, a new phenomenon of great magnitude has appeared: cyberbullying. The Internet can have negative effects when it is used excessively (Tudorel et al., 2019; Vintilă et al., 2018). Literature show that the Internet is using more by the teenagers who have been harassed online or those who have harassed someone online (Tudorel & Vintila, 2020). Cyberbullying refers to all the actions that hurt a person by using electronic devices and consists of online threats, insults sent by sms or calls, viruses, hacking and posting pictures or videos on the Internet without permission. (Netzelmann et al., 2016; Beldean-Galea et al., 2016). In the era of digital communication bullying even increases as the digital environment creates the conditions for this process to flourish (Goian, 2019; Gavrila-Ardelean, Gavrila-Ardelean, 2018).

All forms of bullying are harmful to both the victim and the aggressor, but also to the witnesses and can have consequences extending in the adult life of those affected (Smith and Brain, 2000; Hymel and Swearer, 2008; Arseneault, Bowes, and Shakoor, 2010). Sanders and Phye (2004) highlighted the multitude of consequences that bullying can have: criminality, non-acceptance of peers, mental disorders, delinquent acts (Netzelmann et. al., 2016, p. 14). In addition to the high level of depression, anxiety and social isolation, girls are prone to self-mutilation and suicidal ideation, when being victims or both victims and agressors. (Arseneault et. al., 2010; Smith and Brain, 2000; Rigby, 2003; Sanders and Phye, 2004)

Studies on attitudes towards bullying have shown that most children are in favor of victims, but nonetheless, a minority of them (15/20%) tend to admit and justify agressive behaviors. Moreover, as they grow older, they appear to be inclined towards a pro-bullying attitude (Gini, 2006; Craig, Pepler, and Atlas, 2000; Menesini, Eslea, Smith, Genta, Giannetti, Fonzi, and Costabile, 1997). Age and sex differences were also discussed regarding bullying attitudes. In general, girls are considered to be more empathetic than boys, and this attitude is amplified as they grow older, which is the opposite for men. One possible explanation is the effect of cultures dominated by "tough" men - their predominant model being to be strong and able to control others. (Randall, 1995; Nesdale and Scarlet, 2004)

Given that the place where bullying occurs is the school, this is the main place for prevention measures. A study conducted on the evaluation of anti-bullying measures in schools (Protogerou and Flisher, 2012, p. 123) highlighted five types of interventions: in classrooms, multidisciplinary aproach, social skills training, mentoring and social work support. Class interventions involve anti-bullying discussions, presentations, debates. These activities aim to prevent or combat bullying by improving students' attitudes, changing group norms, developing social skills, etc. Measures throughout the school include a series of interventions that involve the entire school, such as anti-bullying rules and sanctions, teacher training for managing these situations, as well as counseling. Interventions based on social skills training include group activities, such as: developing speaking and listening skills, forming friendships, developing empathy and activities on conflict management techniques.

Essentially, these interventions seek to improve the school climate by working with all educational actors, including adults and students, to establish anti-bullying rules and to communicate these rules to the entire school community. (Sanders and Phye, 2004; Hymel and Swearer, 2008; Protogerou and Flisher, 2012, Gavrila-Ardelean, Gavrila-Ardelean, 2017). For this to happen all those involved should develop the necessary communication skills (Goian, 2004), which use a terminology which is usually proffession addapted (Goian, 2010).

A study on school violence in Romania, carried out by the Institute of Education Sciences and UNICEF (Jigău, Liiceanu, and Preoteasa, 2006), for the elaboration of measures to prevent the phenomenon, started from the ecological model of understanding violence, which attests that violence is determined by multiple factors: individual, relational, cultural and social. In this idea, the interventions were at the individual level, at the relational level, at the community level and at the social level. The individual interventions targeted a series of actions such as: identifying those with violent potential and the causes that can determine these behaviors "by involving teachers and specialized personnel (school counselors, psychologists, social workers, mediators)" (Jigău et al., 2006, p. 205), individualized assistance programs, for aggressors and victims, assisting victims, etc. The interventions at the relational level concerned two sub-levels - the family and the school. The recommendations concerning the family included: informing parents, providing support; the recommendations regarding the school were: elaboration of strategies for prevention and intervention, etc. At community level: implementation of awareness and prevention programs and development of school partnerships with other institutions (NGOs, local authorities, police). At the social level, the measures were: the organization of social campaigns, the implementation of a national system for monitoring bullying, the diversification of social work programs, etc. (Jigău et al., 2006)

The most important thing that schools can do to minimize bullying is to establish an ethos in which this phenomenon is unacceptable and where everyone feels free to talk if it happens. Therefore, creating an atmosphere where young people know that their concerns will be taken seriously and where they are actively involved in developing an anti-bullying policy is indispensable. Anti-bullying strategies implemented in schools show children important lessons about empathy, assertiveness, rights and responsibilities. They also encourage openness, honesty, self-respect and respect for others.

The specific reason why bullying in schools is such an important issue in the educational progress of students is that it disrupts the social and emotional health, which affects the student's ability to learn. In other words, the general objective of the school, which is "to provide an adequate context for learning and development, in which all children are prepared to understand the world in which they live and in which they will become active in the future" (C. Neamțu, 2003, p. 830) is compromised. In this regard, if we consider the objectives of social work, which consider "the installation or reinstallation of mutually beneficial interactions between individuals and society to improve the quality of life for all parties involved" (G. Neamțu, 2003, p. 29), we can point to the crucial role of the social worker.

School social workers are able to work with students, teachers, school administrators and the community to try to prevent bullying from occurring and also to help school staff, to intervene with students and / or the staff involved (Staples, 2016). Together with school psychologists, social workers are best suited to intervene, because knowing the signs and symptoms of aggressive behavior, as well as the effects on victims, they can detect bullying more easily than the rest of the school staff, also knowing how to intervene accordingly. In this sense, the roles played by the social worker are different, depending on the particularity of each situation:

•The role of individual or group counselor: both victims and aggressors need counseling. Many victims are trying to cope, trying their best to be invisible. Usually, the victims want to hide and do not want to discuss the subject. For some victims, coming to talk about being bullied can cause embarrassment. Therefore, social workers should be gentle and empathetic with the victims, normalize the experience and ensure that the session is not humiliating for the child. The social worker should work to break the isolation of the victim. If the victim can create and maintain a friendship, the painful consequences of bullying would be significantly reduced and the long-term loss of self-esteem could be avoided. In this case, we can say that the social worker also plays the role of broker. (Smokowski and Kopasz, 2005)

•The role of broker: The social worker must know the available resources necessary for the client. This role could also take into account, for example, the opportunities for volunteering, which could be particularly beneficial in preventing the isolation, depression and low self-esteem of students, but also for those lacking social skills or empathy.

•The role of lawyer: in certain situations, the social worker becomes the spokesman of the students, defending their interests. For example, there are situations in which aggressors are seen as deviant and punished in ways that are not beneficial. The social worker, must do everything possible not to make the situation worse.

•The role of educator: a beneficial way of dealing with abusive students is to teach them healthy methods of anger management, how to make friends, how to communicate better. Also, the social worker can raise the awareness of the phenomenon of bullying and teach students how to handle these situations. (Astor, Behre, Fravil, and Wallace, 1997)

•Facilitator role: Because bullying is often committed by a group of children against a single victim, each child in the group may need the opportunity to speak, seek support, and get help changing their behavior. Whether it is a support group or a spontaneous discussion in the group, the social worker must manage the group, giving everyone the opportunity to express their opinion and to lead the discussion towards an objective.

•The role of mediator: Conflict situations are often encountered, especially in an environment of tension and frustration, where bullying is present. In these situations, the social worker must resolve the conflicts. (Smokowski and Kopasz, 2005; G. Neamțu, 2003)

Social workers put into practice working skills at both micro-, mezzo- and macro-social levels in the field of school social work and organise community-wide prevention and awareness raising actions (Trancă, 2020). Also, social workers are relevant actors who contribute to a community's effort to prevent early school dropout, that can be caused by bullying. (Trancă, 2018)

Mental health services can also be integrated in programs for combating bullying. (Bărbat, 2018). In combating the bullying, the social worker could become a member of a working group or committee, can assist with grants, taking on a role in evaluating a program and, finally, is involved in implementating the activities. (Staples, 2016)

Materials and methods

The purpose of this research was to identify the differences in attitude and perception of students in two high schools with different status, regarding the phenomenon of bullying in schools. The research covered topics regarding the acceptance and effects of bullying, the feeling of (non) safety at school, the attitude towards the victim and the aggressor and possible important actors in the fight against bullying. The present research did not include cyberbullying.

O1: Identify the perception regarding bullying and its measures to combat it;

O2: Identify the degree of safety that students feel at school;

O3: Highlight the differences of perception regarding the aggressor and victim in the two high schools.

H1: The students that study in a national college, will not agree with bullying behavior and the effects of this phenomenon.

H2: If the students belong to a technological high school, then they will appreciate the involvement of the relevant actors in combating bullying to a greater extent than those belonging to the national college.

H3: If the students belong to a technological high school, the degree of safety they feel at school will be higher than for those belonging to the national college;

H4: The students that study in a national college will have a pro-victim attitude, and the students from the technological high school will have a positive attitude towards the aggressor.

The sample consists of 72 students from the 10th grade from a national college and a technological high school (32 from each high school) in Sighetu Marmatiei. Of the 72 students, 35 are male and 37 are female. Regarding their environment, 39 come from rural areas and 33 from urban areas.

We used an anonymous questionnaire consisting of a part with demographic questions and a part with 35 questions regarding the perception of bullying- 2 questions have a yes / no answer, and the rest have a Likert ordinal scale.

Procedure and data analysis: The questionnaires were applied with the help of the teachers from the two institutions, which distributed the questionnaire to the students; this was the way of selecting the subjects. The data collection period lasted 5 days. The data analysis was performed with the help of the SPSS program and for data analysis, the maximum response values on the scale were taken into account.

Study limitations:

•Due to the small sample, the results cannot be generalized to a larger part of the population;

•The study did not include cyberbullying;

•We did not correlate between students' perceptions and characteristics, such as gender, nationality, environment.

Results.

Following the research, out of the total of 72 students, when questioned if they are familiar with bullying in schools, of the 69 who answered "yes", 34 belong to the national college and 35 belong to the technological college. Only one student stated that he is not familiar with this phenomenon, belonging to the national college and 2 that they are not sure, one from each high school.

Being urged to evaluate the frequency of bullying on a scale of 1 to 5, out of the total of 6 students who identified it as very frequently (corresponding to level 5 on the scale), 3 belong to the national college and 3 to the technological high school; of the total of 14 who answered "frequently" (4 on the scale), 9 are from the national college and 5 from the technological high school; the "rarely" answer (3 on the scale) was given by 38 students, of which 20 were from the national college and 18 from the technological high school; 13 students evaluated the phenomenon as happening very rarely, 3 from the national college and 10 from the technological high school, and only one student chose not to answer this question.

Regarding the actions that constitute an act of bullying, namely using unwanted nicknames, the students responded as follows: 8 "to a very great extent" - 2 from the national college and 6 from the technological high school; 18 "to a great extent" - 8 from the national college and 10 from the technological high school; 19 "to a moderate extent" - 12 from the national college and 7 from the technological high school; 21 "to a small extent" - 10 from the national college and 11 from the technological high school; 6 answered "not at all" - 4 from the national college and 2 from the technological high school.

The concealment of the personal belongings of another student is regarded as bullying "to a very great extent" by 6 students - 4 from the national college and 2 from the technological high school; "to a great extent" by 15-5 from the national college and 10 from the technological high school; "to the moderate extent" by 18-8 from the national college and 10 from the technological college; “to a small extent” by 26 students - 15 from the national college and 11 from the high school; and "not at all" by 7 students - 4 from the national college and 3 from the technological high school.

Regarding the act of spreading gossip about someone, 24 students - 12 from each school consider it to be "to a very great extent" a form of bullying; 23 students - 7 from the national college and 16 from the high school consider this to be "to a great extent" a form of bullying; 16 students answered "to a moderate extent" - 10 from the national college and 6 from the technological high school, 4 "to a small extent" - 3 from the college and 1 from the technological high school, and 5 "not at all" - 4 from the national college and 1 from the technological one.

Asked about the extent of excluding someone from the group a form of bullying, 8 students responded with "to a very great extent" - 4 from each high school; 27 students responded "to a great extent" - 10 from the national college and 17 from the high school; “to a moderate extent” was the response given by 19 students - 11 from the national college and 8 from the high school; 15 students rated this action as a form of bullying "to a small extent" - 9 belonging to the national college and 6 to the technological high school; and "not at all" was the answer given by 3 students - 2 from the national college and 1 from the technological high school.

Offending words against someone were evaluated as a form of bullying as follows: “to a very great extent” by 30 students - 12 from the national college and 18 from the high school; “to a great extent” by 22 students - 10 from the national college and 12 from the high school; “to a moderate extent” by 11 students, of which 7 belonging to the national college and 4 to the technological high school; “to a small extent” by 8 students - 7 from the national college and 1 from the high school; and "not at all" by a single student, belonging to the high school.

When questioned about the effects of bullying on its victims, the loss of self-esteem was assessed to affect students “to a very great extent” by 15 students belonging to the national college and 10 belonging to the technological high school; “to a great extent” by 25 students, of which 13 are from the national college and 12 from the technological high school; "to a moderatet extent" by 18 students - 12 belonging to the national college and 6 to the high school; "to a small extent" by 12 students - 4 from the college and 8 from the technological high school and "not at all" by 2 students from the national college.

On the "isolation" item, 17 students considered that this effect happens "to a very great extent" - 5 from the national college and 12 from the high school; 29 considered this effect happens "to a great extent" - 16 from the national college and 13 from the technological high school; 17 "to a moderate extent" - 10 from the national college and 7 from the technological high school; "to a small extent" was the response chosen by 7 students, of which 3 are from the national college and 4 from the high school, and 2 responded with "not at all", belonging to the national college.

Regarding depression, a number of 15 students responded that this affects the victims "to a very great extent" - of which 5 from the national college and 10 from the technological high school; 23 responded "to a great extent" - 11 from the national college and 12 from the technological high school; "to a moderate extent" was the answer chosen by 15 students - 8 from the college and 7 from the technological high school; 13 students consider that depression affects victimis "to a small extent" - 9 from the national college and 4 from the high school, and 6 - 3 from each high school consider that depression does not affect victimis.

One last evoked effect was suicide, which was regarded as affecting victimis "to a very great extent" by 16 students – 5 from the national college and 11 from the high school; “to a great extent” by 10 students - 3 belonging to the national college and 7 from the technological high school; "to a moderate extent" was the response chosen by 3 students from each high school, "to a small extent" by 24 students, of which 15 from the national college and 9 from the technological high school, and 16 felt that this effect does not affect victims of bullying - 10 students belonging to the national college and 6 to the technological high school. Given these answers, the hypothesis "The students that study in a national college, will not agree with bullying behavior and the effects of this phenomenon” is confirmed.

Students consider bullying as important and should be tackled - out of the total of 72 students, only 3 replied that it should not, they belong to the high school, the answer being affirmative for the rest of the students.

To identify students' perceptions of bullying and who they think should be involved in this endeavor, we brought 6 actors into discussion.

Regarding the teachers, 35 students replied that they could get involved "very frequently", of which 16 belonged to the national college and 19 to the technological high school; 21 students answered "often" to this item, 12 from the national college and 9 from the technological one and only one answered "rarely", belonging to the high school; of the 11 students who chose "sometimes" for this item, 7 belong to the national college and 4 to the technological high school; only one student believes that teachers could never get involved in combating bullying, which belongs to the national college.

Regarding the extent to which parents can get involved, 41 students consider it "very frequently" - 19 from the national college and 22 from the high school; 17 consider that parents should be involved "often" - 11 from the national college and 6 from the technological high school; 2 students from the technological high school consider that parents could get involved "rarely"; 8 students - 5 from the national college and 3 from the technological high school consider that "sometimes" and only one, who belongs to the national college considers that parents should "never" be involved.

The social worker was also evoked in the possible involvement in the fight against bullying, where 7 students from each high school responded "very frequently"; a total of 19 students - 7 from the national college and 12 from the high school considered that the social worker should be involved "often"; 17 students responded "rarely" to this item, 10 from the national college and 7 from the technological high school; of the 13 students who chose the "sometimes" variant regarding the social worker, 8 are from the national college and 5 from the technological high school, and of the 6 who answered "never", 4 belong to the national college and 2 to the high school.

The involvement of the school psychologist was considered to be required "very frequently" by 39 students - 17 national colleges and 22 from the high school; “often” by 15 students - 8 from the national college and 7 from the high school; "Rarely" by 3 students from the national college; "Sometimes" by 11 students - 7 from the national college and 4 from the high school and "never" by a student from the national college.

The non-governmental organizations, were also discussed and the need for their involvement in combating bullying was evaluated as follows: 7 students from the national college and 2 from the high school chose the "very frequent" answer; 8 students - 5 from the national college and 3 from the high school answered "often"; 17 students - 7 from the college and 10 from the " technological high school answered "rarely; "Sometimes" was the answer chosen by 15 students, 9 being from the national college and 6 from the technological high school, and "never" the answer chosen by 22 students, of which 10 from the national college and 12 from the technological high school.

This section did not exclude the possibility of involving students in the fight against bullying. A number of 27 students chose the "very frequent" variant for this item, 14 of them belonging to the national college and 13 to the technological high school; 18-8 from the national college and 10 from the technological high school found it necessary to involve the students "often", 9 "rarely" -5 from the national college and 4 from the technological high school; of the 9 who chose the answer "sometimes", 6 belong to the national college and 3 to the technological high school, and the "never" option was chosen by 3 students from each high school. Therefore, the hypothesis "If the students belong to a technological high school, then they will appreciate the involvement of the relevant actors to a greater extent than those belonging to the national college" is confirmed. If the students belong to a technological high school, then they will appreciate the involvement of the relevant actors in combating bullying to a greater extent than those belonging to the national college.

At the statement "At school I feel free to be myself, without being afraid of others opinion", of the 24 students who answered "very frequently", 10 belong to the national college and 14 to the high school; of the 20 who answered "often", 11 are from the national college and 9 from the technological high school, and of the 12 who have answered "rarely", 8 belong to the college and 4 to the technological high school; 15 students responded "sometimes" to this statement, 7 from the national college and 8 from the technological high school and only one student from the technological high school replied that he "never" feels free to be himself at school.

Also exploring the degree of safety that the home-school journey has, we issued the statement: "During the journey from home to school I face problems with other students", to which one student from each high school responded "rarely", 10 said "Sometimes" - 6 from the national college and 4 from the technological high school, and 60 said "never" - 29 from the national college and 31 from the high school.

For the statement "If one student is attacked by another, no one intervenes in his defense", 3 students validated that this happens "very frequently" - 2 being from the national college and 1 from the technological high school; 7 responded that this happens often - 1 being from the national college and the remaining 6 from the technological high school; of the 28 who responded that this happens "rarely", 15 are from the college and 13 from the high school; 31 students responded to this assertion with "sometimes" - 16 belonging to the national college and 15 to the high school; "Never" was the answer chosen by 3 students - 2 from the national college and 1 from the technological high school.

Evoking the statement "I can confidently speak to a teacher if something bad happens to me", 18 students-5 from the national college and 13 from the technological high school responded "very frequently", 23 students - 13 from the national college and 10 from the high school answered "often", 10- 5 from each high school answered this question with "rarely"; of the 14 who chose the answer "sometimes", 10 are from the national college and 4 from the high school, and of the 7 who have answered "never", 3 belong to the national college and 4 belong to the technological high school. Therefore, the hypothesis that: If the students belong to a technological high school, the degree of safety they feel at school will be higher than for those belonging to the national college is confirmed.

In order to analyze the attitude of students towards the actors involved in bullying, we have issued several statements regarding victims and aggressors. A first statement referred to the victim, stating that he/she is guilty of being assaulted. 3 students responded to this statement with "to a great extent" - 2 from the national college and 1 from the high school, 9 answered "to a moderate extent" - 5 from the national college and 4 from the high school; Of the 47 who responded "to a small extent", 25 belong to the national college and 22 to the technological high school, and of the 13 who answered "not at all", 4 are from the national college and 9 from the technological high school.

Another statement regarding the actors of bullying was: "In order not to be harassed, a student should respect the requirements of the most powerful ones", 4 students from the technological high school responded "to a very great extent"; 7 "to a great extent" - 2 from the national college and 5 from the technological high school; 8 students gave the answer "to a moderate extent" to this statement - 2 from the national college and 6 from the high school, 10 answered "to a small extent" - 7 from the national college and 3 from the high school and 43 students responded "not at all", 25 belonging to the national college and 18 to the technological high school.

For the statement "Personally, I feel sorry for the victims ", 27 students responded "to a very great extent" - 12 belonging to the national college and 15 to the technological high school; 27 answered "to a great extent" - 15 from the national college and 12 from the technological high school; 14 students responded "to a moderate extent" - 8 from the national college and 6 from the technological high school; of the 3 who answered "to a small extent", 1 is from the national college and 2 from the high school, and "not at all" was the answer given by a single student from the high school.

To the statement "I do not like people who make others suffer", 41 students answered "to a very great extent" - 23 from the national college and 18 from the technological high school; 7-5 from the national college and 2 from the technological college replied "to a great extent"; 7 students responded "to a moderate extent", 5 from the national college and 2 from the technological high school; of the 3 students who answered "to a small extent", 1 belongs to the national college and 2 to the technological high school, and of the 14 who answered "not at all", 2 are from the national college, and the remaining 12 from the technological high school.

When they were questioned about the statement "It is normal for the powerful to show their strength and „duel" with others", 4 students - 2 from each high school have agreed "to a very great extent"; 4 students from the national college and 1 from the technological high school agreed “to a great extent”; 4 chose the answer "to a moderate extent" - 1 from the national college and 3 from the technological high school; 12 students responded that they agree with this statement "to a small extent" - 8 from the national college and 4 from the high school and 48 stated that they did not agree at all, 22 being from the national college and 26 from the technological high school.

The assertion that those who observe that someone is being harassed should intervene, has received various agreements. Of the 37 students who answered that they agree "to a very great extent", 14 belong to the national college and 23 to the high school; of the 18 who responded "to a great extent" to this statement, 16 belong to the national college and 2 to the high school; 13 students responded "to a moderate extent" - 6 from the national college and 7 from the high school, and the 4 who answered "to a small extent" belong to the high school.

At the statement "I am/ I would like to be in the gang that intimidate others", one student from each high school replied "to a great extent", and the answer "to a moderate extent" was chosen by 2 students from each high school; 10 students responded "to a small extent" - 8 from the national college and 2 from the high school, and 56 answered "not at all", 25 from the national college and 31 from the high school.

Out of the 72 students, 2 students, 1 in each high school, consider "to a very great extent" that those who are usually victims of bullying need not be upset or affected, because it is just a joke; 9 students agree with this assertion "to a great extent", 4 from the national college and 5 from the technological high school; 12 students agree "to a moderate extent" - 8 from the national college and 4 from the technological high school; 22 agree "to a small extent" - 12 from the national college and 10 from the technological high school and 27 answered that they disagree with this statement, 11 from the national college and 16 from the technological high school. In conclusion, the hypothesis “The students that study in a national college will have a pro-victim attitude, and the students from the technological high school will have a positive attitude towards the aggressor" is invalidated, because even though the students of both high schools expressed pro-victim attitudes, the technological high school expressed this attitude to a greater extent, and the attitude towards the aggressor was more negative in the case of the students from the national college and even more positive for those who belong to the technological high school.

Discussion

Together with family and society, school plays an extremely important role in children's development. If we talk about a national college, both the competitiveness and the need for performance and the tensions are higher. The perceptions and attitudes regarding bullying, which were the subject of this study, are extremely important, especially if we consider their relation to actual behavior. Perception is the result of the processing of information received by people regarding various events around them. It involves organizing the entrances through a dynamic interior process, which models everything that comes from the external environment. Perception is a generic term for a complex sensory control of behavior. (Chartrand and Bargh, 1999)

As we expected, the results of this study suggest that the findings regarding incidence and beliefs about bullying differ from one group of students to another. The connotations of bullying, as well as its effects were perceived differently by the students of the two high schools. If we consider the maximum positive values on the Likert scale ("to a great extent" and "to a very great extent"), we can see that the students from the technological high school considered the bullying acts with a percentage of about 20% more than those from the national college. The actions that were considered to represent a form of bullying were, in the case of both high schools: the spread of gossip (53% in the case of the national college and 78% in the case of the technological high school), the exclusion of someone from the group (39% for the first case and 59% for the second one) and the offensive words against someone (61% in the case of the national college and 83% in the case of the technological high school).

Involvement in bullying has been empirically identified as contributing to isolation, delinquent behavior, crime, psychological distress, additional violence in school, depression, and even suicide (Sanders and Phye, 2004), but students do not appear to be aware of these consequences. Again, about 10% more of the students from the technological high school, compared to those from the national college, considered the decrease of self-esteem, social isolation and depression as possible consequences of bullying, the difference being double in for the "suicide" item, where 50% of those from the high school have expressed positive answers regarding the possibility of this effect, as opposed to 22% of those from the national college.

In estimating the frequency of bullying in their own high school, about 33% of the students belonging to the national college considered that it occurs "frequently" and "very frequently" and 63% chose the "rarely" and "very rarely" variants, unlike those from the high school, where 22% answered "frequently" and "very frequently" and 77% "rarely" and "very rarely". Although these estimates do not accurately denote the incidence of the phenomenon, the way it is perceived by students attracts great concern, especially in relation to their sense of security at school. As seen in the "Results" section, the situation is worrying regarding the sense of security for those at the national college, and to have a clearer picture, we will only discuss the maximum ("very frequent") answers that denote the feeling of security. 28% of the students from the national college feel free to be themselves, without being afraid of others' opinionss, unlike 39% from the technological high school; 5% of the students belonging to the national college and 3% of those from the technological high school gave the maximum answer, for "if one student is attacked by another, nobody intervenes in his defense"; 14% from the national college said that if something bad happens to them, they can confidently talk to a teacher "very frequently", unlike those from the high school, who gave this answer in a percentage of 36%.

Attitudes in bullying situations are sometimes crucial in their evolution, but especially in the effects they will have on the victim (Protogerou and Flisher, 2012; Gini, Pozzoli, Borghi, and Franzoni, 2008; Lodge and Frydenberg, 2005). We have already emphasized the importance of attitude towards the victim and the role of a support group or person in overcoming the effects of bullying (Smokowski and Kopasz, 2005). Social support can be view as a protective factor that could reduce the effect of stressful, overwhelming life events (Tudorel & Vintilă, 2018). Regarding the attitudes towards the main actors of bullying, the maximum positive attitudes in favor of the victim were found at 36% of the students from the national college and 50% at those from the technological high school, and negative attitudes were found in about 4% of those in the national college and 3% of those in the technological high school. The negative attitudes towards the aggressor were similar in the case of both high schools. Pro-bullying attitudes were found at 11%, only in the case of the technological high school, regarding the fact that in order not to be harassed, a student should respect the requirements of the most powerful ones, but 3% of the students in each high school said they would like or are in the gang that bullies others.

Throughout life, people face different life events and challenges that they have to face, but which develops their existence (Tudorel et al., 2013). The need for intervention and prevention programs is obvious, especially in the case of the national college. As we mentioned before, given that bullying is essentially a group process and that most bullying takes place in schools (Olweus, 1993, Protogerou and Flisher, 2012, p. 123), most anti-bullying programs are school-based, and students, along with all educational actors, work on them. The analysis of the results in relation to the students' perception of the actors who might be involved in combating bullying brings out the differences between the students of the two high schools. Unlike teachers, for which an equal percentage of 77% from both high schools chose the maximum values of involvement, the students of the technological high school seem to regard theese actors as the most useful: the social worker - 53% (as opposed to the national college where 39% of the students considered the same), the school psychologist - 80% (the national college - 70%) and the other students - considered by 63% of those from the technological high school as important actors who should be involved "very frequently" and "often". The items to which those from the national college responded to a greater exten,t unlike the students of the technological high school (except for the teachers, where the percentages are equal), refer to the external actors of the school: the parents- 83% considered the necessity of their involvement at the maximum values. (as opposed to the technological high school with 77%) and the nongovernmental organizations - 28% (14% being in the case of the technological high school).

To conclude, we will again emphasize the need to raise awareness: "one of the most frequently observed causes of school violence in Southeast Europe seems to be the denial of the phenomenon, the idealization of the school climate in all its dimensions, or the minimization of the phenomenon of school violence." (Jigău et al., 2006, p. 29). It is unacceptable, in any school, for the students to not feel safe. Awareness of the effects of bullying can motivate important changes. In addition to the mentioned interventions, future studies could investigate the effect of exposure to the natural environment in reducing bullying, since the beneficial effect of nature on physical, mental health and behavior are already known (Swami et al., 2019).

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ASPECTS OF CAREER GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING FOR TEENAGERS

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Abstract: *Academic and career guidance, seen as a component of the instructional-educational process, constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of the education system. Hence the important role that school plays in the training and education of individuals and, therefore, in their academic and career guidance. The most important role in academic and professional orientation lies with the school, as it trains the personality of the student (and implicitly the traits necessary for choosing an educational and career path). If school is considered the main factor in education, having a major importance in orientation, the role of family and other decisive factors should not be minimized either when it comes to the students' choices. The purpose of the investigation was to evaluate the weight and influence of the factors involved in teenagers' choice of academic and career path. We assumed that the role of the school in the decision of academic and professional orientation of teenagers is diminished in comparison to the role of the other factors, in which case taking measures regarding the revaluation of the importance assigned to schools in the academic and professional orientation process could lead to an optimization of the process. In this context, we consider it necessary to emphasize the role that school has to play in this regard, especially by intensifying the activities of the school counsellors in the direction of academic and professional orientation, in parallel with increasing the collaboration with the teenagers' families, in order to achieve influences that are well-grounded, motivated and concordant between the school and the family.*

Keywords: *academic and professional orientation; teenagers; the factors of academic and professional orientation; the opportunities for career development;*

Introduction

Given the circumstances of contemporary society, academic and career guidance and counselling is of particular interest for most aspects of social life. The fact that it has been proven to be an efficient method of harmonizing the tendencies of individual self-realization with the requirements of development demanded by society has transformed this into a complex problem of great and general interest.

Academic and career guidance, seen as a component of the instructional-educational process, constitutes one of the fundamental objectives of the education system. Hence the important role that school plays in the training and education of individuals and, therefore, in their academic and career guidance (Tomșa, Drăgan, Ozunu, 2005).

The two facets to orientation – academic and professional –, initially parallel to one another and relatively independent, have now become simultaneous. Any action that is focused on academic orientation is approached from the perspective of professional orientation and aimed at carrying out its tasks, while career guidance is a natural continuation of academic guidance. Based on this interdependency, school and professional orientation represents an ensemble of psycho-pedagogical, social and medical actions and influences that is constantly exercised and applied with the purpose of helping individuals achieve their academic and professional goals in accordance with the particularities of their personality and the requirements of the social context to which they relate (Tomșa Ghe., 1999). Academic and career orientation represents an intrinsic component of educational action but also the result of certain more or less organized influences.

The role of the school in providing academic and career guidance for the students

The defining note of orientation, on which more and more specialists insist, is its educational character. Subordinating the orientation process to the educational one essentially expresses the interdependency of the two. Both orientation and education are aimed at developing human personality. Educational actions are aimed at developing human personality in accordance with the requirements of the educational ideal, while orientation is aimed at developing those aspects of personality that would allow the individual to achieve certain educational and professional goals in accordance with his own possibilities and the requirements demanded by exercising his chosen profession (Bersan O.S., 2016). Education and orientation thus appear as two complementing facets of the same process: preparing the individual to be socially integrated.

The aim of academic and professional orientation is adequately choosing the educational training and future career (in accordance with the students' abilities and the social needs), so that the individual can obtain the maximum level of work efficiency and professional satisfaction (Jigău M., 2001).

Academic and professional orientation carries a double significance:

•Social importance: contributes to the social integration of individuals and conditions work productivity;

•Personal importance: determines the moral and material satisfaction of the individual.

The main goals of academic and professional guidance are tasks of the instructional-educational process in schools:

•Developing interests, aptitudes, skills;

•Uncovering the students' personality and developing their capacity for self-knowledge;

•Informing students about the evolution of workforce demands and requirements;

•Providing them with advice in matters of academic and professional choices – namely, the academic and professional guidance.

Academic and professional orientation is conceived as an educational action in which the students are psychologically prepared for choosing their educational and professional path. By 'psychologically prepared' we understand acquiring particular knowledge and skills, developing interests, abilities (general and particular), cultivating high aspirations and professional ideals, developing stronger motivations for the choice of educational and professional path, developing certain qualities of will and character (the capacity for effort, consistency, self-demand) (Lemeni G., Miclea M., 2004).

The most important role in academic and professional orientation lies with the school, as it trains the personality of the student (and implicitly the traits necessary for choosing an educational and career path). If school is considered the main factor in education, having a major importance in orientation, the role of family and other decisive factors should not be minimized either when it comes to the students' choices (Călineci, M.C., 2008).

Academic and professional orientation is a continuous and lengthy educational process, lasting throughout the school years and finalizing with choosing a career path. Student guidance is not a task reserved for the end of an educational cycle and done only in certain moments (Tomșa Ghe., 1999). It starts early on (the first grades), undergoing certain stages of maximum intensity when the student is forced to make particular choices.

The student needs to have an active role during his school and career guidance, participating in 'designing' his own future. For this reason, he needs to know himself in an objective a fashion as possible, to be informed, to 'self-train' (develop his own interests, skills, qualities of will and character), so that he may be able to 'self-orient'. Academic and professional guidance relies on an accord between the subjective factor – the individual (with his personality traits) and the objective factor – society (which has certain demands). The main factors of academic and professional guidance are: school, the family and mass-media.

School – main factor of orientation

Orientation is, essentially, an educational activity that is aimed at developing the human personality and preparing it in accordance with the ulterior requirements and demands of education and work. Based on this idea, the fact that schools represent the main factor in academic and professional orientation is widely accepted. It is known that the appearance and manifestation of skills does not happen by itself and neither does it happen simultaneously, some skills manifesting earlier, others later. To promote their emergence, effort and practice are absolutely necessary. School, through the educational process, provides the necessary conditions that are favourable to developing said skills, laying the grounds for orientation.

Research has shown that professional success or failure is determined, to a greater extent, by motivational and personality factors than by intelligence and aptitude. Important here is the formation of a positive motivation (interests, aspirations, attitudes) and certain character traits (perseverance, determination, working power) that will mark any professional pursuit. From this perspective, school has unlimited possibilities for their development.

The role of the family in academic and professional orientation

Regarding the educational action of the family, it is only effective when the goals pursued are in line with those pursued by the school. The educational action of the family when it comes to school and career guidance is only possible on a basis of cooperation with the school.

The tasks of the family could be concentrated around two fundamental objectives: to know the child and to educate him from a mental point of view (aptitudes, motivations, character traits), with the goal of offering guidance in accordance with his physical and psychological particularities and society's requirements. The means available to the parents for them to carry out these tasks are multiple: observation, conversation, tracking the child's academic results, describing some career options, stimulating the child to carry out activities (intellectual or practical), personal example, etc.

The role of mass-media in academic and professional orientation

Orientation involves informing all those involved in its achievement (teachers, parents, and children) about the schools and professions that could be the object of choices to be made. Media has an important role to play in this regard.

The advantage of these means (radio, television, film, press, printed materials) is that they provide valuable information on various aspects that one profession or another requires in a form that is accessible and available to a large number of beneficiaries. These can directly influence the choice itself or indirectly, through a prior psychological training. Researchers believe, however, that mass-media means do not cover the problem of information entirely, the intervention of the school being absolutely necessary in this regard, whose action is in accordance with the students' individual particularities and society's demands.

Methodology

By applying a questionnaire to a group of first year students, we aimed to identify which of the factors contributed decisively to their decisions regarding academic and career orientation at the completion of their high school education and what is the most relevant source of information for teenagers before making their professional orientation choices. The items in the questionnaire through which we have investigated these aspects are:

1. Which of the following factors contributed in a decisive manner in your choice of academic orientation at the end of high school?

- School;

- Family;
- Mass-media (internet, TV, radio, magazines, specialized printed materials, etc).

2. What is the main method through which you informed yourself when it came to deciding on an academic and career path at the end of your high school studies?

- The different programs offered online on the Internet for school and career guidance;
- Psycho-pedagogical assistance offices/centres belonging to pre-university education institutions;
- Newspapers, magazines, specialized publications;
- Family;
- Friends.

The purpose of the investigation was to evaluate the weight and influence of the factors involved in teenagers' choice of academic and career path.

Research objectives:

•Assessment of the proportion of the three main factors that influence academic and career orientation in teenagers: school, family, mass-media;

•Identifying the role of school in regards to academic and professional orientation of teenagers;

•Identifying the main information source for teenagers when it comes to their choice of a career path.

The research hypotheses: we assume that the role of the school in the decision of academic and professional orientation of teenagers is diminished in comparison to the role of the other factors, in which case taking measures regarding the revaluation of the importance assigned to schools in the academic and professional orientation process could lead to an optimization of the process.

Target group: the questionnaire was applied to a sample of 100 students,

from their first year of study in different faculties of a university in Cluj-Napoca.

Results and discussions

Following the application of the items in the questionnaire to evaluate the weight of the factors involved in the decision of academic and professional orientation of teenagers at the end of their high school studies, we recorded the following results:

Table 1. Factors that influence teenagers' decision in terms of academic orientation

	Frequency	**%**
School	**25**	**25**
Family	**34**	**34**
Mass-media	**41**	**41**

Total	**100**	**100,0**

Table 2. Sources of information regarding academic and professional opportunities

	Frequency	**%**
Programs offered on websites on the Internet	**45**	**45**
Psycho-pedagogical Assistance Offices/Centres	**12**	**12**
Newspapers, magazines and specialized publications	**9**	**9**
Family	**21**	**21**
Friends	**13**	**13**
Total	**100**	**100,0**

We find thus that the choice in terms of academic and professional orientation in the cases of teenagers is decisively influenced for the majority of teenagers (41%) by the information in mass-media (internet, specialized publications, etc), followed by influences from the family for 34% of the respondents and only 25% of them considered school to be the main factor in their decision regarding academic and career path at the end of their high school studies.

Regarding our investigation concerning the sources of information that teenagers turn to in this context, we once again find that mass-media, via programs offered by different web sites online, represents the preferred method of obtaining the information necessary to making their choices in orientation (for 45% of the questioned), followed by family (for 21% of the teenagers questioned), then their group of friends (13%) and only 12% of them acknowledge Psycho-pedagogical Assistance Offices/Centres as being their main source of information, through their guidance programs and other such activities.

Informing individuals about the opportunities for career development represents one of the activities that lies at the foundation of career counselling and orientation, alongside other complementing activities, such as: discovering and assessing their personalities, educating them with the purpose of facilitating them choosing a career path, as well as the actual guidance and counselling.

This activity needs to take place throughout the entire life of an individual: in the initial stages of choosing an academic and professional path, later on – after finishing their professional training, when the individual is looking for a job, or throughout his active life, whenever the individual desires to change his workplace. The activity implies informing the individual in regards to: the types of studies that he could follow and their profiles; the professional world and its dynamics; the possibilities and different forms of professional qualifications; demand and offer on the job market; the most sought after professions; the most useful methods for finding a job; self-knowledge methods and improvement of individual performance; the social work offers available in different fields.

Online career guidance and counselling programs have ascertained their importance especially due to the low number of institutions and experts that provide orientation and counselling services when considering the demand for such services. They are either perceived as a modern alternative to services that require direct contact with a counsellor, or as a means to improve the quality of such services, as a tool to be used in complement with the direct approach, a tool which cannot entirely replace direct counselling. (Jigău M., 2003). But the information gathered this way should be evaluated and interpreted by a counsellor, who is able to find the relevant elements for each individual's professional interests. The use of these programs in career orientation and counselling presents advantages as well as disadvantages.

Among the advantages are: solving the problem related to the low number of counsellors and high number of individuals who need these services; the possibility of correlating personal characteristics of individuals to the jobs which require those skills and abilities; the possibility to use these sources during a period of time suitable to the individual; the possibility to repeat certain experiences, which facilitates the acquisition of information; the presentation of information in a flexible manner, allowing quick selection with the help of key words; the possibility to improve the efficiency of classic counselling; helping support people who live in isolated areas or suffer from certain disabilities which prevent them from reaching counselling centres.

The disadvantages of using programs offered by web sites for career orientation and counselling are: the need to constantly improve the programs, because the information they contain quickly becomes obsolete; the impossibility for individuals to obtain any other information than the one on the web site, to practice hypothetical situations or find solutions to their own problems; the absence of the counsellor's skills, making the act of counselling impersonal; the passive reception of information by the individual; the existence of certain unprofessional web sites, which include mistakes and haven't been validated and might mislead the individual. To avoid this risk, it is advisable to use these programs together with consulting a counsellor. The counsellor: will recommend professional, relevant web sites; will offer additional information; will warn the individuals on the programs' limitations; will interpret the results and complete the evaluation through other techniques; the long term use of the Internet can bring about a feeling of loneliness and isolation.

The beneficiaries of these career orientation and counselling programs are:

•students in secondary schools and high schools, especially those in senior years: they use these programs to inform themselves and make realistic decisions;

•students in Arts and Crafts schools: they particularly need information about employment and the work market;

•university students: they use the programs for information about the work market, requirements of certain jobs, techniques of finding a job or making a decision;

•young people who have abandoned studies and are looking for a job or special qualification courses;

•adults who are looking for a workplace or want to change theirs or participate in training courses.

For the students in secondary and high school system, another possibility of information and career counselling are the Centres of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance. School counsellors who work there have numerous responsibilities related to career orientation and counselling: they support the self-evaluation of students and make assessments; guide the students to making a stable, grounded career choice; provide information and material about the educational and formation systems and about the work market; bring attention to the educational offers of the school system; present the students the Jobs Classification in Romania; organize visits in various institutions with a professional informational purpose; support students in developing communication skills and preparing to look for and occupy a position: writing CVs, letters of application, preparing for interviews, telephone conversations and newspaper announcements; support the placement of graduates; make surveys regarding the students' options and choices; build a partnership between school and family for a better career orientation.

Conclusions

Although school is considered the main factor of academic and professional orientation, a function fulfilled mainly through the services performed by the school counsellors within the Centres/Offices of Psycho-pedagogical Assistance, the reality shows that a major role in the decisions regarding teenagers' school and career orientation is played by the career guidance programs offered online and the information available on the Internet. In this context, we consider it necessary to emphasize the role that school has to play in this regard, especially by intensifying the activities of the school counsellors in the direction of academic and professional orientation, in parallel with increasing the collaboration with the teenagers' families, in order to achieve influences that are well-grounded, motivated and concordant between the school and the family.

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ASPECTS OF STUDENTS MOTIVATION FOR THE DIDACTIC CAREER

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Abstract: *The paper refers to the motivational aspects that determine students of the 1st and 2nd level of the Psychological-Pedagogical Teacher Training Programme at the West University of Timișoara, Romania, in choosing the didactic career. The sample on which the research has been done is constituted of 100 students, 50 following the 1st level of study and 50 the 2nd one.*

Keywords: didactic career; motivation in choosing the didactic career; students of the Psychological-Pedagogical Training program.

1. Theoretical frame

Didactic profession implies for the ones practicing it, a series of responsibilities, roles, qualities and abilities. Although, but also the fact that at the level of this profession activities are done with personalities in formation progress, pupils, make it remark from the other many professions in which the human being is working.

It is extremely important that the ones that choose to have this noble profession, with a major importance on social level, always to take it into consideration as a first option to which to dedicate with their complete abilities and person, and not as a reserve option, comparing it to a raincoat used only in case of bad weather.

The professional ability of a teacher is deduced from the roles that he has within the school. Consequently, the teacher is an expert of the educational process that he selects, he processes and adapts from didactic point of view the information that he shall transmit to pupils, a creator of learning situations, a motivating agent that starts and maintains the interest and curiosity of pupils, a leader of the pupils' group, a good manager, councilor, a friend and a model to follow for the pupils with whom he works.

Students who want to have a didactic career have the possibility to follow a Psychological-Pedagogical training program. This can be attended within the Departments for the Didactic Personnel Training from universities, both in parallel with the license studies, respectively master studies, or in post-university regime.

Similar to any activity field, also in choosing the didactic career motivation is extremely important, representing itself the immobile of this choice.

As (Sillamy, 1996, p.202) mentions, motivation represents the"assembly of dynamic factors that determine the behavior of an individual". Al. Roșca (1943, p.8) offers another definition, considering that motivation is represented by the”totality of internal mobiles of the behavior, both native or acquired, known or not, simple physiological necessities or abstract ideals“.

The problem of motivating teenagers to choose the didactic career is extremely important both at the level of the educational system and at social level, representing the object of various studies.

O. Pânișoară presents in her paper several studies having as object precisely the identification of reasons that lead to the option for the didactic career. Consequently, J. Gordon has identified as reasons in choosing the didactic career: the influence derived from the subjects' families; the influence exercised by several friends; the influence derived from a positive model of teacher; the influence derived from a negative model of teacher; the necessity to "make a difference" in the sense of supporting the community to which they pertain, to offer equal opportunities for the pupils' development; "the calling" felt for the didactic professional; the love for children; long holidays and the pleasure to learn. Goldberg, P. E. and Proctor, K., M., presented as reasons for choosing the didactic career: the wish to work with children; the passion for a school subject; the importance conferred to teaching; the influence exercised by one of the teachers that the subjects had in the past; the status offered by the didactic profession; the lack of another career option; the opportunities to advance in the career and the safety offered as a job for beginners. Lisa Francks identifies five aspects that contribute to the manifestation of the attraction towards the didactic career: interpersonal factors, social service, continuity, material benefits, temporal compatibility.

Other authors (Șerănescu, 2011; Trif & Popescu, 2013; Șerănescu & Popescu, 2014) confirm on the first place the classification of reasons for choosing the didactic career, done by the subjects, the pleasure to work with pupils, and in the top of the classification of reasons that might determine them not to choose the didactic career, identifies the non attractive salary.

In the herein study our aim is to illustrate the classification of reasons that determine the students registered at the Post-University Programs for Psychological and Pedagogical Training, Level I and Level II, from the DPPD of UVT to choose the didactic career, to identify the students' option to leave the didactic career and of the reasons that might determine this option.

2. Research design

This study is developed in the period 2016-2017 on a sample composed by students registered at the Post-University Programs of Psychological and Pedagogical Training, Level I and Level II, at UVT.

2.1 Research objectives

The proposed objectives refer to:

1. Classification of students' reasons when choosing a didactic career;
2. Identification of the students' option of leaving the didactic career and of reasons that might determine this option.

2.2 Research methodology

Within the study it has been applied a questionnaire. Formulated questions followed the identification of the subjects' genre, of the psychological and pedagogical training program in which the students are implicated, the classification of reasons on the option for the didactic career (on the 1st place being the most important and on the 6th place the less important), identification of subjects that might leave the didactic career and of reasons that might be at the base of this option.

The sample implied in the research is composed by 100 students, 50 registered at the Ist level and 50 registered at the IInd level. Regarding the repartition depending on the genre and level of studies within the sample, information is presented as it follows (Table 1):

- 26 students of male gender;
- 76 students of female gender;
-50 students registered at the Ist Level;
-50 students registered at the IInd Level;

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	male	26	26.0	26.0	26.0
	female	74	74.0	74.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	
Valid	Ist level	50	50.0	50.0	50.0
	IInd level	50	50.0	50.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	100,0

Table no. 1 (*The frequences of the sample depending on the gender and* on the level of studies)

2.3 Research results interpretation

Further on we shall present the information obtained based on the study, presenting each reason implied in choosing the didactic career and their classification depending on the genre and on the level of studies: (Tables 2,3,4,5,6,7):

		I like to work with pupils				Total
		1	2	3	4	
Gender	Male	5	0	15	6	26
	female	25	26	23	0	74
Total		30	26	38	6	100

the level of studies	Ist level	0	11	33	6	50
	IInd level	30	15	5	0	50
Total		30	26	38	6	100

Table no. 2 *Statistical data SPSS* I like to work with pupils

Reason - I like to work with pupils - is classified on the 1st place in the classification order, as being the most important, by 30 students, of which 5 are of male gender and 25 of female gender.

All the 30 students are registered at the IInd Level. The same reason is located on the 2nd place in the classification top by 26 students, all of female gender. Of those, 11 are registered at the Ist level and 15 at the IInd level. On the 3rd place as importance, the reason is located by 38 students, 15 of male gender, 23 of female gender, 33 registered at the Ist level and 5 registered at the IInd level. The pleasure to work with children is classified on the 4th place as importance by 6 students, all of female gender, registered at the Ist Level. None of the students implied in the sample didn't classified the reason in discussion, on the 5th, respectively 6th place as importance for choosing the didactic career.

		I think that the didactic profession is important from social point of view				Total
		1	2	3		
gender	Male	5	9	12		26
	female	26	47	1		74
Total		31	56	13		100
the level of studies	Ist level	10	28	12		50
	IInd level	21	28	1		50
Total		31	56	13		100

Tabel no. 3 *Statistical data SPSS* - I think that the didactic profession is important from social point of view

Reason - I think that the didactic profession is important from social point of view - is classified on the 1st place in the classification order, as being the most important, by 31 students, of which 5 are of male gender and 26 of female gender.

Of those, 10 are registered at the Ist level and 21 at the IInd level. The same reason is located on the 2nd place in the classification top by 56 students, 9 of male gender and 47 of female gender. Of those, 28 are registered at the Ist level and the other 28 at the IInd level. On the 3rd place as importance, the reason is located by 13 students, 12 of male gender, 1 of female gender, 12 registered at the Ist level and 1 registered at the IInd level.

None of the students implied in the sample classified the reason in discussion, on the 4th, 5th, respectively 6th place as importance for choosing the didactic career.

		I think I have the necessary qualities for being a good teacher					Total
		2	3	4	5	6	
gender	Male	2	7	1	15	1	26
	female	0	0	49	24	1	74
Total		2	7	50	39	2	100
the level of studies	Ist level	0	0	9	39	2	50
	IInd level	2	7	41	0	0	50
Total		2	7	50	39	2	100

Table no. 4 *Statistical data SPSS* - I think I have the necessary qualities for being a good teacher

Reason - I think I have the necessary qualities for being a good teacher - is classified on the 2nd place in the classification order, as being the most important, by 2 students, both of male gender and registered at the IInd level. The same reason is located on the 3nd place in the classification top by 7 students, all of them being of male gender and registered at the IInd level. On the 4rd place as importance, the reason is located by 50 students, 1 of male gender, 49 of female gender, 9 registered at the Ist level and 41 registered at the IInd level. On the 5th place as importance, the reason is located by 39 students, 15 of male gender, 24 of female gender, all registered at the Ist level. On the 6th place as importance, the reason is located by 2 students, 1 of male gender, 1 of female gender, all registered at the Ist level. None of the students implied in the sample located the reason in discussion on the place with the higher importance in the classification.

		I would have a stable job					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
gender	Male	10	0	10	3	3	26
	female	26	16	32	0	0	74
Total		36	16	42	3	3	100
the level of studies	Ist level	0	2	42	3	3	50
	IInd level	36	14	0	0	0	50
Total		36	16	42	3	3	100

Tabel no. 5 *Statistical data SPSS* I would have a stable job

Reason - I would have a stable job - is classified on the 1st place in the classification order, as being the most important, by 36 students, 10 of male gender and 26 of female gender, all registered at the IInd level. The same reason is located on the 2nd place in the classification top by 16 students, all of them being of male gender, 2 of them registered at the Ist level and 14 registered at the IInd level. On the 3rd place as importance, the reason is located by 42 students, 10 of male gender, 32 of female gender, all the 42 registered at the IInd level. On the 4th place as importance, the reason is located by 3 students, all 3 of male gender and registered at the IInd level. On the 5th place as importance, the reason is located by 3 students of male gender and registered at the IInd level. None of the students implied in the sample classified the reason in discussion, on the 6th place as importance.

		it is a profession that allows a lot of leisure time					Total
		1	3	4	5	6	
gender	Male	3	1	12	0	10	26
	female	0	0	23	34	17	74
Total		3	1	35	34	27	100
the level of studies	Ist level	3	1	35	11	0	50
	IInd level	0	0	0	23	27	50
Total		3	1	35	34	27	100

Tabel no. 6 *Statistical data SPSS* - it is a profession that allows a lot of leisure time

Reason - it is a profession that allows a lot of leisure time - is classified on the 1st place in the classification order, as being the most important, by 3 students of male gender registered at the Ist level. The same reason is located on the 3rd place in the classification top by 1 student of male gender registered at the Ist Level. On the 4th place as importance, the reason is located by 35 students, 12 of male gender, 23 of female gender, all the 35 being registered at the Ist Level. On the 5th place as importance, the reason is located by 34 students, all the 34 of female gender, 11 registered at the Ist level and 23 registered at the IInd Level. On the 6th place as importance, the reason is located by 27 students, 10 of male gender, 17 of female gender, all registered at the IInd level. None of the students implied in the sample classified the reason in discussion, on the 2nd place as importance.

		I want to become a teacher in the community I left from			Total
		4	5	6	
gender	Male	6	10	10	26
	female	0	13	61	74
Total		6	23	71	100
the level of studies	Ist level	6	23	21	50
	IInd level	0	0	50	50
Total		6	23	71	100

Tabel no. 7 *Statistical data SPSS* - I want to become a teacher in the community I left from

Reason - I want to become a teacher in the community I left from - is classified on the 4th place as importance, by 6 students of male gender registered at the Ist level. On the 5th place as importance, the reason is located by 23 students, 10 of male gender and 13 of female gender, all registered at the Ist level. On the 6th place as importance, the reason is located by 71 students, 10 of male gender, and 61 of female gender, 21 registered at the Ist level and 50 registered at the IInd level. None of the students implied in the sample classified the reason in discussion, on the 1th, 2nd, respectively 3rd place as importance.

Information on the subjects' intention to give up to an eventual didactic career and on the reasons that might be at the base of this decision can be found in the tables 8, 9 and 10:

		the intention of giving up to a didactic career		Total
		Yes	No	
gender	Male	5	21	26
	female	1	73	74
Total		6	94	100
the level of studies	Ist level	6	44	50
	IInd level	0	50	50
Total		6	94	100

Tabel no. 8 *Statistical data SPSS* -the intention of giving up to a didactic career

		imposed to me the registration at the Psychological and Pedagogical training program		Total
		Yes	no	
gender	Male	4	22	26
	female	0	74	74
Total		4	96	100
the level of studies	Ist level	4	46	50
	IInd level	0	50	50
Total		4	96	100

Tabel no. 9 *Statistical data SPSS* - imposed to me the registration at the Psychological and Pedagogical training program

		I noticed that the didactic profession doesn't represent them		Total
		Yes	no	
gender	Male	2	24	26
	female	1	73	74
Total		3	97	100
the level of studies	Ist level	3	47	50
	IInd level	0	50	50
Total		3	97	100

Tabel no. 10 *Statistical data SPSS*- I noticed that the didactic profession doesn't represent them

We can observe from the information presented above, the fact that only 6 subjects, a percentage of 6% from the sample, expresses the intention of giving up to a didactic career in case they would work in this field. Of those, 5 subjects are of male gender and 1 of female gender. All the 6 subjects are registered at the Ist level, fact that can highlight a certain immaturity in choosing the career in comparison to the ones registered at the IInd level. Also, we observe that the expressed reasons, sitting at the base of such a decision of subjects are on the one hand, the fact that it has been imposed to them the registration at the Psychological and Pedagogical training program (4 subjects of male gender registered at the Ist level), and on the other hand the fact that they noticed that the didactic profession doesn't represent them (2 subjects, one of female gender and one of male gender, registered at the Ist level).

3.Conclusions and proposals

We can observe, based on the development of this study, that the majority of subjects locate on the first 3 places, as importance in choosing a didactic career, the pleasure to work with pupils, the profession importance at social level and the job stability. The other three reasons approached within the study (it is a profession with a lot of leisure time, I think I have the necessary qualities to be a good teacher, I want to become a teacher in the community I left from) are considered less important by the majority of subjects, being classified on the 4th, 5th and 6th places as importance.

Considering the fact that the study has been developed on a reduced number of participants, we propose, on the future, to extend this study on various students and eventually to include various variables, so that the obtained data to represent a solid base for the development of new training programmes with a higher impact in order to motivate teenagers to choose a didactic career.

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EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND SYNDROME OF OCCUPATIONAL BURNOUT IN ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF OF HEALTHCARE UNITS

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Abstract: *Occupational burnout is particularly common in healthcare staff and is closely related to the quality of services provided. Most relevant researches mainly focus on health professionals, bypassing the administrative staff of healthcare units. However, administrative staff plays a key role for the efficiency of healthcare services, and therefore the occupational burnout of administrative staff negatively affects the organization and quality of the provided healthcare services, as patients may not receive proper care. The occupational burnout of administrative staff is a crucial and important issue and is worthy of study, because the new knowledge that will be acquired can be used in the design of training interventions regarding prevention and treatment. The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon of occupational burnout of administrative staff in healthcare units with emphasis on the experience and needs, especially educational needs, of participants concerning the prevention and treatment of the problem. A qualitative methodology was used with semi-structured interviews with the administrative staff of Ippokrateio General Hospital of Thessaloniki. The main issues that emerged from the analysis of the interviews are: "fatigue" (physical and mental) and "working conditions" (organizational issues, communication) which are related to the experience, but also to the causes of occupational burnout, "work efficiency" related to the consequences of occupational burnout. The topic of "educational needs" is present in most of the participants' responses, but is most prominent in those that mention the organizational and management needs of employees, both individually and collectively, as the dominant factor in addressing the problem of occupational burnout.*

Keywords: occupational burnout; administrative staff of healthcare units; education; training

Occupational burnout and special educational needs in health care units

Occupational burnout is a phenomenon that occurs in many workplaces and is noteworthy, as it can affect a large percentage of employees and their efficiency at work, as well as the proper functioning of the healthcare institution and the quality of services provided (Bakker et al., 2000). For this reason, it is considered a determinant factor in many educational programs, especially in the context of lifelong learning (Gavrila-Ardelean, 2009). This is especially important when it refers to healthcare services, and a large number of studies show that this phenomenon is very common in healthcare professionals (Campell, Sonnad, Eckhauser, Campell, & Greenfield, 2001; Guntupalli. & Fromm, 1996; Ramirez, Graham, Richards, Cull, Gregory, Leaning, Snashall & Timothy, 1995; Grunfeld, Whelan, Zitzelberger, Willan, Montesanto & Evans, 2000; Gabbe, Mellville, Mandel & Walker, 2002). More specifically, occupational burnout is a chronic condition which can lead to a serious crisis in the life of employees because they may lose their interest for work. In general, this could be seen as a lack of confidence, energy and enthusiasm. The levels of occupational burnout show how good the employees' relationship with their job is, but also with the institution (Leiter &Harvie, 1998). According to scientific studies, a person's physical and mental health, as well as his level of job satisfaction, can be affected by the characteristics of his job (Bakker et al., 2000). Therefore, the modification of labor relations through educational programs, is considered that under certain conditions, can have a clear effect on the likelihood of developing occupational burnout syndrome (Gavrila-Ardelean & Moldovan, 2014).

In general, occupational burnout syndrome is defined as physical and mental fatigue in the workplace with main characteristics some parameters that make the employee lack motivation to work. Some of these parameters are: a) lack of job satisfaction, b) emotional exhaustion resulting in melancholy, sadness and other negative emotions, and c) depersonalization regarding work experience. In fact, what causes occupational burnout and ought to be described and analyzed is the way in which chronic and prolonged work-related stress affects the person, who weakens over time and feels that his mental reserves are not enough so as to cope effectively with work pressure (Maslach & Leiter, 2008).

Many scientists have defined these concepts differently and are trying to come up with different solutions to “treat” this large-scale phenomenon. These interpretations, since occupational burnout has not been recognized internationally as a disease with specific symptoms, try to define the “paths” of symptoms and the factors that play an important role in order to suggest a method of “treatment” for patients experiencing this type of symptoms in their workplace (Maslach, 1982).A way that has been shown to help with the symptoms of occupational burnout, such as the “burn out” symptom defined by Maslach as a negative individual experience regarding the interpersonal relationships in the workplace, is to identify employees' symptoms and treat them immediately through actions such as education, before the appearance of the above symptoms of emotional exhaustion, inactivity and dissatisfaction (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001).

This makes it necessary to conduct studies in specific populations of employees to clarify the exact nature of the problem, the difficulties faced by employees, their precise educational needs, factors that lead to this situation and in general the process through which their efficiency is affected (Kelemen, Fond-Harmant, Gavrila-Ardelean, Nache, Plus & Stassen, 2016; Gavrila-Ardelean, 2017). With regard to healthcare services, the majority of the studies conducted concerns nursing staff and health professionals in general, in all specialties, bypassing the administrative staff of healthcare units (Fond-Harmant, Gavrila-Ardelean, 2016; Gavrila-Ardelean, et al., 2016). However, in addition to health professionals, the administrative staff has a key role in the efficiency of healthcare services. This means that when there is occupational burnout in administrative staff, the organization and quality of healthcare services provided are affected and patients do not receive proper care. Therefore, a serious problem related to the quality of healthcare services is not only the occupational burnout of nursing and medical staff, but also of administrative staff, and the recording of educational needs should not rule it out.

Administrative staff in relevant literature researches is referred to as an aggravating factor regarding the occupational burnout among nurses. For example, according to a study by Poncet et al., (2007) the possible conflicts between administrative staff and nursing staff affect the quality of working relationships, having as a result increased levels of occupational burnout among nursing staff. Another inherent difference between administrative staff and nursing staff has to do with the organizational responsibilities, the lack of occupational resources, especially in intensive care units, where autonomy and taking responsibility by the administration is not favored, as well as the uncertainty under which decisions are made in relation to demanding cases of patients. This uncertainty includes various exogenous factors that can act as a deterrent to the proper operation of the hospital, such as staff reductions, continuous social resource constraints, and ongoing workplace changes such as abolitions and mergers of organizations. The reduction of administrative staff is a particularly aggravating factor which can often lead to the dysfunction of an institution. In such cases, administrative staff is often forced to make difficult decisions that lead to increased pressure and contribute to the appearance of occupational burnout syndrome. In order to avoid such crises, it is important that decisions are made collectively by the administrative staff after communicating with all the employees. Therefore educational activities that would help the smooth integration of administrative staff in special environment of health services would be very effective.

With regard to healthcare services, decisions are often made late and this happens due to the lack of information and resources needed, especially in remote areas facing various shortages. One of the difficulties administrative staff is facing has to do with their responsibility to motivate the nurses to perform their tasks effectively, in order to provide proper patient care. This is a particularly difficult issue, taking into account that a large percentage of nurses due to occupational burnout refuse to try to find motivation and be efficient at work. The responsibility of the administrative staff to motivate the nursing staff is particularly demanding, given the fact that this effort is being made in order to motivate all the employees of the hospital and at the same time to synchronize their work. Often, this responsibility, along with the lack of organization, relevant knowledge and work experience, can lead administrative staff to develop occupational burnout syndrome. These factors can even be a reason for resignation, because they are running out of mental reserves in their effort to take all these responsibilities (Karapoulios, 2005).

According to Hansen et al., (2009) it seems that these factors are a major challenge for administrative staff that they often cannot handle, therefore a large percentage of these employees is characterized by depersonalization and feel dissatisfied with their job. In addition the administrative staff, according to a study by Datsis et al., (2007) is responsible for the communication problems that arise between patients and the rest of the staff. The process and effort for proper communication and understanding of patients' needs can often be very difficult due to the severe cases treated in some departments such as oncology, surgery or pathology. Within this context, the lack of proper organization and communication has shown that it leads to lack of job satisfaction, depersonalization and other symptoms that reduce employees' self-esteem regarding their work performance and productivity.

According to a study conducted by Bernardi et al., (2005) it seems that those responsible for the strategies and organization of a hospital, have the highest rates of occupational burnout and work stress, due to the high responsibility that comes with their position. According to a study by Zavlanos (2006), administrative staff often find it difficult to meet high responsibilities in order to make important decisions regarding patients, as they don't feel able to successfully hold an organizational position in a clinic or a hospital ward and direct the nurses' work. Also, according to Laschinger et al., (2000) it seems that there is an effect of emotional obligation through the work of administrative staff according to which their decisions should inspire confidence to the rest of the staff. Many members of the administrative staff feel that they cannot satisfy the nursing staff and inspire confidence, and as a result the nurses are not focused on the goals of the clinic. As a result, administrative staff feels detached from the work. Ray et al., (2000) found that the lack of administrative support and respect for the nursing staff is directly linked to symptoms of occupational burnout and causes emotional exhaustion to all the employees due to the lack of communication. Therefore, it seems that the different characteristics of these jobs are also the factors that lead to work-related problematic and stressful situations and ultimately lead to symptoms related to occupational burnout syndrome. These are exactly the factors that should be considered as educational needs in order to organized special educational preventive interventions.

However, despite the above studies, occupational burnout of administrative staff is a poorly researched issue, which should be further studied because of its great importance. According to the literature review, the majority of the studies concern the occupational burnout of nursing staff, while little research has been conducted regarding occupational burnout of administrative staff (Poncet, et al., 2007; Hansen et al., 2009; Bernardi et al.., 2005; Laschinger et al., 2000; Ray et al., 2000). This finding makes it necessary to conduct further research on administrative staff in order to study the extent of occupational burnout and how it could be avoided by developing targeted educational activities. This information could be used by hospital administrations to help identify early signs of occupational burnout and, consequently, to treat it. From relevant literature (Maslach, 1982; Maslach et al., 2001) it has been found that there are factors that lead employees to occupational burnout and it appears that occupational burnout of employees and their reduced efficiency during work may be the result of these factors or is significantly affected by them. However, it is important to identify the extent of the phenomenon of occupational burnout in administrative staff, as well as some of its unexplored aspects, such as how they experience it and how they deal with it, and this is where the originality of this research lies.

Methodology

For this reason, in the present study, qualitative methodology has been chosen, as it is suitable for issues that have not been studied enough, such as the phenomenon of occupational burnout in administrative staff. Qualitative research, unlike quantitative research, allows for a deeper penetration into the concept, as it enables researchers to explore in more depth the experiences, perceptions, views and values through their personal, social and professional contexts. In addition it allows them to understand the way of thinking of the participants' about a phenomenon, aiming at gaining a deeper and more complete knowledge and interpretation of the studied phenomenon. Also, qualitative research projects are quite flexible because qualitative research aims to investigate and understand in depth the social phenomena and furthermore leaves room for new findings that may not exist in the quantitative researches that have been conducted to date. Researchers in health sciences are using quality research to clarify research questions that cannot be answered with quantitative research, as qualitative research has an advantage over quantitative research in finding information. Quantitative approaches use closed methods with predefined responses, while qualitative use more open methods and can explore issues that have not been predetermined since the beginning of the research, leading to a more complete view of the problem (Creswell, 1994). When the problem is clearer, it is easier to deal with it through interventions that will aim at its prevention, reduction and timely treatment. These interventions will be more effective when they are tailored to the particular characteristics, but also to the needs and working conditions of the target population.

Purpose and research questions

The general purpose of the research is the investigation of the phenomenon of occupational burnout in the administrative staff at Ippokrateio General Hospital of Thessaloniki. Based on the literature review, the study questions were defined as follows:

- Do administrative employees face the problem of occupational burnout and, if so, how exactly do they experience it?
- In what causes do administrative employees attribute the problem of occupational burnout?
- How do administrative employees codify the effects of occupational burnout regarding their efficiency at work?
- How do administrative employees cope with the problem of occupational burnout?
- What are the general and especially the educational needs that administrative employees mention as major in preventing and dealing with occupational burnout?

Population and sample

The population of the present study was the administrative staff of various categories and levels of health units. The participants were initially contacted by telephone and were briefed on the purpose and schedule of the research. Participants were also informed about the approximate duration of the interview and after they gave their consent and met the criteria for their participation in the research, a meeting was scheduled at the participants' working space. The sample consisted of 10 administrative participants from Ippokrateio General Hospital of Thessaloniki. The main criteria for selecting the sample was the participants to experience the problem of occupational burnout and to strongly and visibly have the relevant symptoms, without suffering from any other physical or mental illness or facing any other stressful situation besides their work at the present time, because this could lead to inaccurate results. As exclusion criteria were defined the presence of a physical or mental illness such as depression, generalized anxiety disorder, etc. as well as aggravating off-the-job factors that could create intense stress and fatigue such as divorce, death, childbirth etc. The study was proposed and approved by the Scientific Council as well as by the General Board of Ippokrateio General Hospital of Thessaloniki. The semi-structured interview was chosen as the most appropriate method because it is characterized by a set of predefined questions and at the same time has a great deal of flexibility regarding the order and the content of the questions (Katerelos, 2008). The interviews were conducted in the personal working space of each interviewee. Pseudonyms were used in order to preserve the anonymity of participants and they were given the assurance that the content of the interviews would be confidential. This is essential not only for ethical reasons but also to ensure the integrity of the research process.

Credibility and validity

Particular emphasis was also given on ensuring the credibility and validity of the research and in particular regarding reliability the following actions took place:

-The participants were selected after careful observation so as to meet the criteria of this study. The employees finally participated met all the criteria and furthermore they had previously participated in similar interviews, therefore they were familiar with the interview process, they were willing to give enough information and had the courage to talk about sensitive issues and to be honest.

-The whole process, from study design to interview planning, was examined by a colleague who was familiar with the methodology of qualitative research, but had no connection with the subject of this study, in order to identify possible biases and discriminations on behalf of the researcher.

- The results were reviewed by the participants themselves. Specifically, after each question the main points of each participant's answers were summarized separately and then their opinion was asked about the correctness and the full understanding by the researcher.

Regarding the equally important issue of validity, the present research has:

- Validity of production methods, i.e. research questions are in line with the logic of qualitative research which, in this particular occasion, is interested in studying the experience of employees with occupational burnout and their overall way of thinking. All this can only be studied through a qualitative research and not with the standard questionnaire questions.

- Validity of data interpretation because the analysis process was also reviewed by another researcher with experience in qualitative research as well as in the subject of the present research, in order to identify any omissions.

Analysis and discussion

The findings of the research are presented based on the following thematic axes: 1) The experience of occupational burnout, 2) The perception of the employees on the causes of the problem 3) effects on their efficiency at work, 4) management strategies 5) employees' needs and the role of educational programs.

The experience of occupational burnout

The first question was how employees perceive the concept of occupational burnout. Regarding the definition of occupational burnout it is perceived as physical and mental fatigue that is related to their work. Most of the administrative employees perceive occupational burnout as a type of physical and mental fatigue that is related to difficult working conditions. The concepts of "*fatigue*" and "*working conditions*" were dominant in most of the participants' responses. The answers contained these concepts were grouped into two categories. The first category was named "physical and mental fatigue" and the second one "working conditions". Regarding the first category, most of the respondents stated that occupational burnout is physical and mental fatigue. Typically, the concept of occupational burnout was attributed as follows:

G.M. "*something like psychological and physical fatigue, but more psychological I guess. A feeling of not wanting to go to work, not wanting to see anyone*"

Z.M "*Occupational burnout is psychological and physical fatigue of the employee in his effort to adapt to everyday difficulties that arise in his working place*"

It is also noteworthy that this interpretation of occupational burnout results from the direct experience of the participants and not from some kind of theoretical information on the subject, as it happens with the following category. The second category was related to the working conditions of the respondents. Several of them stated that occupational burnout is related to difficult working conditions.

E.N. "Occupational burnout is described as a syndrome. It is a general condition in which the worker, the employee, feels exhausted because of his job or the working conditions. There are, of course, some stages before it becomes burnout. But that's it".

At this point the interpretation given by the participants is more theoretical. Meaning, we can distinguish two types, one empirical-experiential and one more theoretical.

The next question was whether the issue of occupational burnout concerned them, that is, whether they had experienced it in the past. It should be noted that all respondents have experienced occupational burnout in the past and most of them continue to experience it.

M.Z. "During the last year I have experienced occupational burnout, during the last year".

MK. "And now, during this period, working in this new department, during the last 5-6 months, but also in the past, in the previous departments I worked in".

The next question was how they came to this conclusion, meaning, what made them think they experience occupational burnout. The main reason for this belief is that they have various symptoms, both physical and mental. In particular, they reported psychosomatic symptoms such as fatigue, physical exhaustion, joint pain, psychological transitions, stress, anxiety, reduced performance and refusal to work. Most employees responded that they felt physically and mentally exhausted.

Z.M. "Physically I feel tired, I am not in a good mood, I become irritated, nervous, I often overreact and I realize it afterwards. I generally don't feel well both physically and mainly psychologically".

L.L. "I'm basically not in the mood to work, I'm exhausted, my work is stressful".

L.S. "I can't give 100% to my job because of the intense fatigue".

M.K. "I feel tired. I am very tired, that is, when I finish work, I feel mentally tired, my mind is tired and my body is tired as well".

The next question was whether the employees were satisfied with their work. Most of the respondents said that their working environment deprives them of job satisfaction. From participants' answers as well as from the content analysis, the concept of "*dissatisfaction*" emerged, which included dissatisfaction with working environment and dissatisfaction with "*salary*".

D.K. "I am satisfied because I do what I like the most. As far as working conditions are concerned, no, I'm not happy. It could be better".

As for the question of whether they would change their job if they had the opportunity, the concept of "I would" or "I like it" appeared in most of the respondents' answers. The answers that contained these concepts were grouped into two categories. The first category was called "I would change my job" and the second "I like my job". Regarding the first category, the respondents stated that they are not satisfied with their work and if they had the opportunity, they would change it.

S.M. "Definitely, because the conditions are really bad".

S.G. "Yes, experiencing the present situation, I would do it, yes".

As for the second category, respondents would not change their job, because they loved their profession:

F.G. "I don't think so. I like what I'm doing, I don't think so".

K.G. "No, I like my profession, it gives me great satisfaction. But I would like conditions to be better in my field".

Perceptions regarding the causes of occupational burnout

Most of the respondents believe that occupational burnout is caused by various factors, such as working conditions, lack of staff, increased workload, and the difficulty to communicate with senior executives. The analysis of the answers resulted in the category "working conditions". The following excerpts from the interviews of the administrative staff verify this perception:

G.G. "I would say the excessive demands of the superiors and the nature of the work itself".

M.K. "First of all, I think the increased workload is the most important thing. Often, the environment, the working conditions, the superiors and so on. Mainly, I think there is heavy workload".

Referring to working conditions that cause dissatisfaction, it turned out that important factors of dissatisfaction are the pressure and the way of management by superiors, lack of staff, work stress, increased workload, work tensions, possible discrimination by superiors.

Z.M. "The lack of communication that often exists between colleagues, the lack of organization that would make it easier for us to carry out our duties. All this makes our working life difficult".

In addition, as to what is bothering them most, the administrative staff stated that the main reasons are fatigue due to severe lack of staff and increased workload.

M.H. "I'm tired of the workload and of the fact that I have to complete work in a certain deadline, meaning that workload increases without extending the deadline".

M.X. "Everything makes me tired, the environment makes me tired, the routine and the schedule makes me tired. Mainly the fact that there is no improvement, the conditions remain the same and there is no progress in the workplace".

Despite the fact that it is not clearly stated in their responses, they highlight the need for organizational and educational interventions that could significantly contribute to improving communication, organization as well as administration and working conditions in general.

The consequences of occupational burnout on the efficiency of administrative employees

Occupational burnout is presented as a difficult situation and its consequences in the workplace can be detrimental for the institution, as it can affect the consistency and efficiency of employees. The majority of respondents stated that their efficiency has been significantly affected. From the analysis of their answers, the category of "work efficiency" emerged. The views of some participants are noteworthy:

K.L. "I'm not productive, so I can't work, because whether it's a headache or lack of sleep or something else that reduces my energy… so I can't work because I feel tired. I have a lack of concentration and all this affects my efficiency at work".

Occupational burnout has affected not only the performance of respondents but their relationship with their colleagues as well. Poor communication is a major issue of conflict, while some participants report frustration and staff disputes.

M.G. "Yes, I believe that. We are all very stressed and we argue for insignificant reasons and tensions are generated at work".

N.E. "Yes, it has an impact. I have become more nervous, more abrupt, while I was not, and I no longer have the courage to react when I notice injustice. By injustice I mean injustice regarding work schedule, dealing with incidents, towards a colleague. Now I am insensitive which is very common in my workplace".

Regarding their relationship with other people, most of the participants reported communication problems due to working conditions.

L.L. "It has affected the relationship with my superiors because I can't cope with everything that they make me do. Therefore we don't communicate well".

Consequently, educational and organizational interventions could prove to be effective in increasing the efficiency of employees, provided that they aim to improve the working conditions that reduce their efficiency, meaning communication and distribution of workload, i.e. when they are adapted to the specific characteristics of the framework to which they will be applied.

Management strategies

As for management strategies, most participants stated that they adopt some mainly through personal effort in order to deal with the difficulties that arise in their work. They noted:

M.Z. "Look, because I'm an optimist, I try to think positive. I try to cooperate as best as I can. Of course, there will be conflicts. Conflicts are not always negative, they can also be constructive. Being in conflict with someone doesn't mean that it is always something negative, it can lead to something good".

As for the treatment of physical symptoms, the employees mentioned the use of relaxation strategies such as music, walking, taking medication, rest, fitness. They noted:

G.M. "I try to rest, relax and forget my problems for a while so I can relax mentally and physically."

M.Z. "I deal with the physical symptoms by taking medication because of the musculoskeletal problems I got from work. Now I'm trying to get as much rest as possible and my back pain is relieved this way. That is what I do".

In addition, the administrative staff is quite satisfied with the way the physical symptoms are treated.

Moreover, to address the psychological symptoms, respondents mainly relied on support from friends and relatives and generally through stable relationships in order to deal with problems arising from their workplace.

N.E. "My way and my strategy is to confide what troubles me to trustworthy colleagues. By "trustworthy" I mean that you have to trust them because you never know if what you say to them will be mentioned to someone else. And beyond that, I try to go for a walk. I also started exercising for a while. That's what I do…".

G.M."I try to talk to friends so that they can tell me their opinion and not keeping it inside me. I try to deal with it".

Also, the majority of the respondents when asked about the strategies they use to deal with the problems and difficulties that arise in other aspects of their lives, namely private-family and social life, due to occupational burnout, pointed out that they are trying to separate professional and personal life.

L.S. "I try to be with people in my family who make me relax. When I leave work I try to "shut everything out".

F.S. "*I try… I have realized that I brought home the problems and stress from work. And I understood that this is wrong. When I leave work, I try to leave this part of the job behind me, not to pass on the pressure and all the psychological stress to my family*".

Employees' needs and the role of educational programs

Most participants responded that if they could, they would change working conditions so that they would feel more satisfied in their workplace. It is also important to have good organization, clear instructions from superiors, adequate training and specialization of employees in their work. They also mentioned that training seminars and educational programs are of major importance and would help significantly in dealing with the problem of occupational burnout. From their answers, the category "educational needs" came up and is indicated in what they say as follows:

M.X. "I still think…it could start from the workplace, that is, I would like to work in a more pleasant space, more spacious, I would like to have the option of training and education of the staff and more frequent personal contact, beyond professional".

M.P. "It is important to get trained in a variety of ways, through seminars, through psychological support from a psychologist, to teach us ways to manage both our emotions and our physical fatigue. How to manage this whole thing. I would be open to such help from an expert on this issue".

MK. "I would like clearer instructions from my superiors, or I would say objectivity regarding what to do, how to do it and so on. I don't know how I could change the working conditions and what motivation I would like so as to function more effectively".

D.K. "*I would like a clear role for everyone, that is, everyone to have specific responsibilities. There should be administrative support, from the administration, from the staff as well as from the superiors. Group sessions could be held. Educational seminars on stress management and conflicts could be conducted. They could also implement music therapy in the emergency room to improve working environment. E-health would help al lot, protocols would also help a lot. I believe that protocols or even guidelines would help and our work would be clearer and more simplistic. I also believe that specialized staff would simplify our work. Meaning to use people who are well trained and know their job. If they are trained, things would be a lot simpler and the work would be of better quality. Because there are times when I work like hell, and I'm not talking just for me but for everyone… I run around covering for other people weaknesses. But if others were trained, I wouldn't have to do all that*".

Most participants said that what would motivate them most in order to be more efficient would be administrative support, better environment, better salary, rewards and recognition of their efforts, better staffing of the departments, improved working conditions, more effective teamwork, improvement of the organization and clarification of goals.

N.M"I think in recent years health field is facing many problems. I wouldn't want a higher salary but I would like to hear a good word or someone to recognize our work, because we run around all day trying to do our best ".

L.S. "Additional staff. I still insist that there should be additional staff. I think that health and education field needs staffing. Staff and equipment are required, and I think that there would be no disputes between colleagues, I would not have to say things that I am ashamed of right now. For example, there is lack of a medicine and I am required to ask the patient to get it on his own. That has happened and other problems will follow. And what I have told you… I don't know if people have understood what is happening in the public health sector, I don't know if they are fully aware".

M.G. "Maybe to hear a good word from someone. Someone to say "yes, thank you, you helped me today" or "well done, you did well today", "we are exhausted but we did it, the day ended well". Something like that. Just a good word".

H.A"I could work in an office on my own, unaffected, so that my work to be more effective. I could share the workload with another colleague because I have a huge amount of work to do".

M.Z."I would like my workplace to be more organized…and the working conditions in general…additional staff. All that…A better distribution of work so that my work would really satisfy me at the end of the day".

From the above mentioned, the need for training is evident both in an individual and team level. More specifically, the need for proper training and education of the employees was expressed in order to avoid the excessive effort that leads to occupational burnout and, at the same time to improve work quality. Equally important is the conduction of seminars by psychologists regarding the management of conflicts and negative emotions. At the same time, educational interventions at administrative level, are required so as to improve communication and working conditions, in the direction of integrating administrative staff into the changing context of health services. Therefore, both the adequate and continuous training of the employees regarding their field and training on handing difficulties and negative emotions, as well as educational interventions at the level of organization and administration, are highlighted through the employees' responses as a crucial factor in dealing with occupational burnout.

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ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract: *The university environment is one of the most important areas where future professionals can learn how to develop their assertive communication skills. Assertive communication can represent a chance for open communication that helps university students to become more efficient in dealing with others around them, getting better relationships. Developing assertive communication skills, university students will be able to reduce stress from their relationships with tutors, colleagues, administrators, librarians, etc. A very important aspect for them in this relationship is to learn how to stand up for their rights as students, as friends, as citizens, etc. University students with assertive communication skills also gain a better understanding of self-criticism and constructive criticism without developing a sense of self-importance. Developing assertive communication skills during university period, they are going to perform to their full potential, and to start their career in a new, successful manner. The main scope of this paper is to identify international and national universities which promote on their website interventions to develop their students' assertiveness and the articles about effectiveness of such interventions. We identified numerous international universities but just a few national universities with assertiveness interventions programmes on their website. Also, we identified a large number of studies about assertiveness interventions, conducted with human medical students, but none in other domains with a rather high level of stress, too - educational or military.*

Keywords: *counselling centres; university; students; assertive communication; efficiency*;

Introduction

A university student's life is an extremely challenging period, with social and academic demands, many studies pointing out a high level of anxiety and stress. In this regard, there are studies that sustain that in academic exam period increases the stress level of university students (Zunhammer *et al*., 2013), and others that support the opposite (Samfira & Arslan, 2017). During this stage of their life span, undergraduates need to cope with many psychosocial changes (Dyson & Renk, 2006; Nerdrum, Rustøen & Rønnestad, 2006). Stressful events and changes from academic environment can affect students' health and performance (Hamaideh, 2011). Some undergraduates may experience a kind of acculturative stress", because of their emotional or physiological reaction generated by new (academic in this case) environment (Berry, 2005). There are students trained even from pre-academic period to face challenges, but at the same time, there are students with no experience in this domain, and they are facing many problems.

The models provided by the social environment are often improper for the academic environment and the future specialist. This is why one of the main responsibilities of parents and educators, as significant adults in pupils' life (Evans, 1959) is to help young people, from the very beginning, to communicate in an assertive manner (Kolb & Handley-Maxwell, 2003) or to organize trainings in assertive communication for students from elementary school (Michelson & Wood, 1980) or secondary school (Rotheram, Armstrong & Booraem, 1982). However, before offering trainings for students, it is important to identify the communication style of every student involved, in order to give them helpful advice to change their unproductive communication style (Waldherr & Muck, 2011).

Even though, some researches have sustained that there are strong relations between personality and communication styles (Leung & Bond, 2001; Weaver, 2005), some articles demonstrate that assertive communication style can be learned (Lewittes & Bem, 1983; Lin et al., 2004; Tavakoli et al., 2009). Aiming at this purpose, it is absolutely necessary to explain to the university students the characteristics of the Heffner (1997) communication styles: aggressive, passive, and assertive (Kolb & Griffith, 2009).

Communication styles

An aggressive communication style „applies force physically or symbolically, in order, minimally, to dominate and perhaps damage or, maximally, to defeat and perhaps destroy the locus of attack" (Infante, 1987, p. 158). This style is characterized by a monopolizing attitude, which demonstrates powerful behaviour (Heffner, 1997). People with an aggressive communication style disrespect or ignore the other individuals' rights (Kolb & Griffith, 2009).

A passive communication style is adopted by fearful individuals who have the tendency to block their feelings in confrontation with different problems in different situations (Bennis & Nanus, 1985).

An assertive communication style enable individuals to express ideas or opinions in a direct manner (Dasgupta, Suar & Singh, 2012), help people to sustain affirmation without need of proof, and to express their feelings, rights, and thoughts without attacking the rights, feelings and thoughts of other people (Sims, 2017; Freeman & Adams 1999; Rakos, 1991). This kind of communication style helps individuals to know that they have the right to refuse unreasonable requests (Beatty, Plax & Kearney, 1984), by saying „NO" to peers requests (Kolb & Griffith, 2009). They are not indifferent to the feelings of their communication partners and this is why they carefully utter both demands and complains in a polite but firm way. Assertiveness is a style of communicating and a competence that can be learned and acquired in different life's stages.

Assertive people are self-controlled about their behaviours (Garner, 2012), and are good communicators (Benton, 1999). People with a high level of assertiveness are more self-actualized (Lange & Jakubowski, 1976), are more confident about their opinions (Alberti & Emmons, 1970; 1974), and more confident about their ability to interact with other individuals (Masters & Burish, 1987). Instead, non-assertive individuals are described to be shy, self-depreciating and apologetic (Sims, 2017). From a gender perspective, Costa, Terracciano & McCrae (2001) sustain that men are more assertive than women are. From a cultural perspective, women with low level of assertiveness are liked more than women with a high level of assertiveness (Amanatullah & Morris, 2010). Assertiveness is strongly influenced by our personality traits, especially by Extraversion (Sims, 2017) and Neuroticism (Bratko et al., 2002).

Assertiveness trainings

As a concept, assertiveness training appeared in the 1970s, in Western countries: numerous courses were proposed for university students by specialists from university counselling centres. These actions reflect the particular interest in this topic. At tertiary level, students can learn how to communicate in an assertive manner (Tavakoli et al., 2009), to develop new skills necessary in university environment, especially in their first year of study.

For this purpose, each university, depending on its specificity, should organize courses to develop assertive communication skills for their students. It is very important to take into account the specific problems of their future profession and career (Gelberg & Gelberg, 2005).

Assertive training is a structured intervention, including guidance, role-play, feedback, modelling, practical training, and an objective assessment from specialists (McCartan & Hargie, 2004). The main idea in assertive training is that people have never had the opportunity to give answers, in an assertive manner, to their communication partners (Lin et al., 2004). The interest in evaluating the effectiveness of intervention, which aim at the development of assertive communication skills at the population level, dates back to the 1950s. Researches has been conducted by psychologists Salter and Wolpe, as a type of behavioural therapy (Peneva & Mavrodiev, 2013), from 1970s as a form of intervention for protection of human rights (e.g. Heimberg, Montgomery, Madsen Jr. & Heimberg, 1977; Alberti & Emmons, 1970; 1974), and in counselling centres from universities, as a different type of group therapy (e.g. Golden, Corazzini & Grady, 1993).

For students, researches in this area, conclude that interventions involving the development of assertive communication skills, aim in particular, at reducing the stress level (Gelberg & Gelberg, 2005), increasing the level of self-esteem (Anant, 2009; Lin et al., 2004), increasing the self-efficiency at female university students (Akbari, Mohamadi & Sadeghi, 2012), decreasing the high scores of irrational beliefs (Alden & Safran, 1978), and increasing job satisfaction (Lounsbury et al., 2003).

Because communication styles reflect the social status of both partners (Berger, Fisek, Norman & Zeiditch, 1977), an important role of university is to help student with different cultural models (other country or region) to cope with many new demands: how to question a teacher, express different opinions, and decline a request (Tavakoli et al., 2009). Following this line, is important even for teachers, to know that assertive individuals (teachers) have a strong contribution to students' learning and satisfaction (Aylor & Opplinger, 2003).

Study purpose

Taking into consideration the positive consequences of students' assertiveness and the research support for promoting intervention/training for assertive communication skills by the university counselling centres, this paper identifies the prevalence of interventions for developing assertive communication in universities (which appear in university website) from abroad and from Romania. The researcher was interested in identifying how many university counselling centres organise and describe their trainings/workshops programmes on their website. This article highlights the differences between the counselling centres from Romania and other countries from the West in promoting explicitly programmes for developing assertive communication skills.

Methodology

For this article we followed the methodology used in Harris (2011), with a quite similar issue. This paper is a review of i) interventions provided by university counselling centres to their students or by other bodies aiming to help students in adopting an assertive communication style and ii) articles about the results of the assessment of the effectiveness of the interventions for the development of assertiveness. These interventions address both students and teachers, to help them to develop assertive an assertive communication style in relation with colleagues, teachers, and students. The first step was to identify on Google the universities which organise trainings/workshops for developing assertive communication skills. The second step was to identify the articles who published the results of this kind of interventions.

Results and discussion

As useful as the studies on assertiveness are the interventions for developing assertive communication provided by different university counselling centres for their students and teachers – because they reflect the theory implemented into practice. These trainings reflect the importance of developing assertive communication in their future specialists, to help them adapt to real life situations.

A large number of university counselling centres from abroad offer interventions for their students to develop or to increase their level of assertive behaviour. The intervention offered by the Counselling & Mental Health Centre from the University of Texas at Austin, Group Assertiveness Training evaluates the students individually to exclude students with psycho-pathological conditions that would prevent them from understanding and participating in the group process. The groups are small, 6 students, and 6 sessions of 2 hours. It is recommended to record 2-5 sessions to be used later as feedback (Printz, 2003). The same university also organizes workshops on the topic Assertiveness Training in five sessions aiming to help students develop a responsible and efficient assertiveness. Each session is made up of ten students. There is no previous evaluation of those wishing to attend the workshop. This means that their aim is to help all persons interested in personal development.

Oxford Brookes University organises numerous assertive workshops for their undergraduates through its Counselling Service, of 1-3 sessions each. The University also recommends its students to adopt a communication style that will make their teachers answer to students' e-mails without being too insistent. At the same time, this university emphasises the importance of the non-verbal behaviour as well as the risk of being ignored if they avoid eye-to-eye contact with their teachers, if they are shy persons or if they speak too low (Haynes, 2000).

Texas Woman's University, through TWU Counselling Centre, helps its students to develop such behaviours as thinking positive about themselves, take responsibility for their own deeds and avoid taking responsibility for the behaviour of other people, paying attention to the type of information required in different circumstances, offering and accepting constructive criticism, which sometime is very difficult even for teachers and, learning that they have the right to say NO, without giving explanations.

The University of Leads presents to its students an intervention adapted from the book of Williams (2001) aimed to help their undergraduates in addressing their teachers in a polite manner, asking back things lent to their colleagues, and communicating their feelings to their colleagues, friends, or partners. The training is made up of two sessions and it contains the 10 rules of assertiveness and three questionnaires for the assessment of assertive behaviour – past, current, and future.

The University of Wisconsin, through its Counselling Centre, has an assertive intervention for their undergraduates in three parts (a questionnaire of evaluation, a list of their own rights, and an example of conversation for each technique). For some students is easier when they have examples.

The University of Iowa, helps their students, in a different manner, by presenting articles of the self-help type. Reading those papers, the university hopes to develop their assertive behaviour.

The University of Glasgow organises workshops on this topic with the intention to help their students by self-evaluation and putting into practice techniques of assertive communication, strategies that help them face the challenges of a job. It is a good method of connecting undergraduates with possible types of issues that will challenge them in their future professions.

The University of Sydney, through its Centre for Continuing Education, organises two-days courses on this important topic, assertive communication, which describe the manipulative features of the three types of behaviour (assertive, passive and aggressive), and teach students how to say NO in eight different ways. Special attention is paid to role-play and evaluation.

The Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University from Australia provides its students, through the RMIT Student Counselling Service, with a training regarding assertive communication. It contains four communication style – aggressive, passive, passive-aggressive, and assertive. The intervention presents how to be more assertive, claiming that assertiveness is useful not only in problematic situations but also in building up healthy relationships (Pfeiffer, 2010).

At national level, searching on the Internet the keywords „university assertiveness", „assertive communication programme / training /intervention for university students", it was identified the „Gheorghe Asachi" Technical University of Iasi, which organises a workshop for its students, through the Counselling Centre, in groups of 5-25 students, on assertive and non-critical communication.

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu, organises for its students, through Career Counselling Centre, a 4-hours training on effective communication, which also includes the development of assertive communication skills. If there are further interventions/trainings, organized by the counselling centres from universities, they have not been identified.

Numerous studies have explored the positive effects on the students accepting to participate in interventions/trainings for the development of assertive behaviour as well as correlation with different aspects: decrease of stress level (Gelberg & Gelberg, 2005; Lee & Crocket, 1994), increase of self-esteem and personal self-efficacy in girls undergraduates (Akbari, Mohamadi & Sadeghi, 2012), and increase of satisfaction in career (Lounsbury et al., 2003). Research focusing on training for tertiary level students are rather scarce and focusing on medical students (Omura, Levett-Jones, 2019a; Omura, Levett-Jones & Stone, 2019b; Warland, McKellar & Diaz, 2014; Lin et al., 2004; Begley & Glacken, 2004) or veterinary students (Gelberg & Gelberg, 2005).

But even though university counselling centres organise courses/workshops to develop assertive communication skills, it does not mean that university students are interested in them or will attend the entire course. Assessing the efficiency of interventions/training requires not only attending the entire programme/training, but also students' feedback. The problem seems to be more complex, and this could be the reason for this scarce number of studies that assess the effectiveness of assertive communication skills interventions/trainings for university students. Galassi et al (1974) have studied the relationship between assertiveness and shame – one of the reasons why students choose to attend programmes/trainings for development of assertiveness behaviour. Other studies have also showed a negative correlation between assertiveness and shame (Barrow & Hayashi, 1980; Garcia & Lubetkin, 1986). This feature is quite common among university students and it generates adjustment issues both within their groups and with their teachers. Certainly, there are more personality traits that might determine university students to enrol in courses/workshops for assertive communication skills development. They just have to be discovered.

After having analysed the interventions/trainings of development of assertive communication and the articles, we could observed that though the topic of assertiveness is very important, and many universities adopt interventions for helping their students to become more assertive. The society needs young persons that are well prepared to cope with different problems from university to jobs. This way, the university environment represents a part of a large system where future specialists may have the opportunity to learn how to develop their assertive communication skills. The importance given to developing students' assertive communication skills could be seen through the numerous training sessions posted on academic sites, aiming to help students improve their skills in this kind of communication.

Even though there are many universities at international level that organise assertiveness development interventions/trainings, there are only a few universities at national level. It is true that many counselling centres mention that their purpose is to develop students' assertive communication skills, but they do not provide explicit information about duration, number of students, number of sessions, and content. Analysing the universities' websites that explicitly offer interventions/trainings for developing assertive communication skills, numerous at international level and quite low at national level, it can be sustained that in Romania developing assertiveness remain a problematic issue. Maybe it is true that assertiveness is better developed in western culture not in a Latin one (Eskin, 2003). In terms of identifying studies that analyse the effectiveness of interventions for the development of assertive communication skills, organized by counselling centres from universities, the absence of studies may reflect both the difficulty of identifying a large number of participants for an article to be published in an international databases journal, as well as a lack of interest from university students to enrol and finish the interventions/trainings.

Even though, the results present large number of studies on assertiveness interventions with university, it is important to continue in this direction, with research not only from human medicine but also from other domains. In addition, another issue that draws attention is the absence of studies that develop assertiveness to reduce the stress level from other specializations, not just from human and veterinary medicine. It is true that the medical field is one with a very high level of stress (Clarke & Ruffin, 1992; Dahlin, Joneborg & Runeson, 2005; Burnard, et al., 2008; Edwards et al., 2010; Blomberg et al., 2014), but certainly there are other domains with a rather high level of stress, too: *educational* (Murray-Harvey et al., 2000) and *military* (Larsen, 2001).

Reaching expected results (developing assertive communication skills) will be of real help not only for the field of education, but also at personal level (better, more open relationships with one's friends and partners) and at professional level (develop healthier interpersonal relationships, manage conflicts, increase self-esteem, and human wellbeing in workplace).

Limitations of the study

First, due to numerous universities from abroad that organize trainings to develop students' assertive communication skills, it was impossible to synthesise the results from all universities. Second, although this paper was conducted rigorously, there is a risk to omit recent relevant studies. Third, the study presents a review of the interventions for the development of assertive communication skills in universities, at international and national level, without having an own interventions/training for university students. Fourth, this paper brings nothing new related to assertive communication skills development trainings for other student groups than in the medical field (human or veterinary), but merely reports their absence.

Impact of the study

We support, with this article, the promotion of sessions for the development of assertive communication not only for the students but also for their teachers, administrators who need to understand the benefits of such an approach in order to accept and promote it. This study also highlights the low number of interventions/trainings organized by the counselling centres in Romanian universities, to develop the assertive communication skills necessary for both professional and personal life.

In addition, this article emphasizes the necessity to assess the students' level of assertiveness in the very beginning (first year) to have enough time to organise interventions for students with low level of assertiveness, as in many other universities from Europa, United States, and Australia. In the same time, it would be a good practice the follow-up studies after 1-2-3 years, to evaluate the efficacy of interventions. Future studies are needed, especially in assessing the pre-service students' level of assertiveness, because they are the future teachers who can help their students to become more assertive, as students and as professionals. Because the teacher represents the most influential adult in the students' lives, after his parents (Evans, 1959), he is in a special situation to be able to contribute to decrease the cultural differences between Western and Latin context, in terms of the development of assertiveness (Chandrasekaran et al., 2010).
At least, this paper proposes the assessment of assertiveness and evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions, even for students from other fields with high level of stress (educational and military fields).

Conclusions

The present study addressed the issue of developing assertive communication skills among university students, organized by the counselling centres from universities. It has been searched if there is an interest from university counselling centres to develop this kind of communication, which brings many benefits (reducing stress, reducing bullying, building self-esteem, increasing work satisfaction). The existence of intervention/trainings aiming explicitly to develop assertive communication skills, both at international and national (Romania) level has been analysed to present concrete examples for other counselling centres.

The results have identified a great interest from abroad universities to teach assertiveness to their students probably being more aware of the positive consequences on their personal and professional life. At national level, only two universities have been identified to organize, according to the model from abroad, trainings to develop students' assertiveness. One possible explanation could be that in Romania there is still no emphasis on assertive communication, neither in pre-university education, nor in the universities or workplaces (except for multinationals companies). But, Romania is part of the European Union, and we should help young people to adapt to any society, bearing in mind that internationalization will affect us more and more.

Another aspect identified, quite problematic, is related to studies that have analysed the effectiveness of interventions/trainings for the development of assertive communication skills among university students. All papers identified, which have presented the results of the assessment of the effectiveness of the interventions for the development of assertiveness, were conducted with human medical students (nurses, midwifes or doctors) and only one in the veterinary medicine field; the medical field being considered one with a high level of stress. We also draw attention on the absence of such studies in other categories of students, in the fields that are also considered to have a high level of stress (ex. educational and military).

To sum up, this article has increased our knowledge regarding the active implications and transparency of counselling centres from other countries/continents in developing assertiveness in university students (number of sessions, description of every session, the enrolment process, the specialist they will work with), to help them have a clear picture of the whole process.

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E-INCLUSION VERSUS *DIGITAL DIVIDE* – A CHALLENGE FOR ROMANIAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC GROWTH

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Abstract: *The educational system in Romania cannot keep pace with education and technology. Technologies are omnipresent in human networking but they are not operated similarly in the training and educational systems. Although teachers admit the importance and necessity of new technologies in the educational process, these means are barely used in the teaching-learning activities. More often than not, teachers turn to digital means in order to search and prepare information materials and not as educational resources to be exploited in the classroom. In order to benefit from a flexible and open learning system, ICT potential must be fully exploited thus improving professional training and educational systems and facilitating their adaptation to the digital world. The aim of these provisions is to improve education efficiently through promoting personalized learning which is more beneficial and more efficient. Pedagogical integration of open educational resources is a priviledged modality to create a digital inclusive educational environment, whose potential can be exploited in the interest of learners and for diminishing the negative effects of digital divide. The quick pace of growth of Coronavirus pandemic worldwide during the period December 2019 – March 2020, generated complex effects on the educational level, too. Educational factors (teachers, pupils, students, parents, non-formal education agents etc.) faced the prospect to discover another educational universe, unknown for some of them. The digital /virtual educational environment became and was legally defined as the only educational environment for the entire Romanian educational system for an indefinite period of time.*

Keywords: e-inclusion; digital divide; digital /virtual inclusive learning environment; information communication technologies (ICT); open educational resources

1. Introduction

The relation between information society and economic growth is in direct relation, in the sense that through capitalizing information, time and physical capacity become more efficient. The necessity to invest in human capital appears as a natural result of this change. Digital technologies allow the access, processing and transmitting of information more easily and rapidly. Electronic information becomes the key-resource for digital economy.

Information and communication technologies represent a very important tool in the improvement of the social inclusion process since they give people the possibility to find a new job, provide information regarding the rights and obligations of citizens, facilitate professional development and at the same time, offer a solution for an uniform and general improvement of open resources on a national level. This process is known as *e-inclusion*. Social inclusion and fight against poverty are part of UE objectives which lead to economic growth and more employment possibilities. Consequently, formal and informal education for citizens is seen as a solution to develop digital competences at all educational levels.

Information and communication technologies (ICT) are essential in education nowadays. Most companies share the idea that ICT represent one of the main themes of educational policies when it comes about an educational system able to prepare future citizens to live adequately in the information and knowledge-based society (Ham &Cha, 2009).

2. Theoretical Background

2.1. Digitalization of Romanian education between challenge and reality

Taking into consideration the 7 pillars at the base of Digital Agenda for Europe 2020 (https://ec.europa.eu/digital-single-market/en/policies/shaping-digital-single-market), socio-economic analyses, consulting civil society and public institutions in public administration, Romania defined four major fields adapted to the current context, followed as a national vision in relation to the ambitious program of Digital Agenda, which will lead to a sustainable economic growth and a rise in competitiveness. These four domains are described as it follows: Field of Action 1 - eGoverning, Interoperability, Cyberspace Security, Cloud Computing, Open Data, Big Data and Social Media; Field of Action 2 – ICT in Education, Health, Culture and eInclusion; Field of Action 3 - eCommerce, Research, Development and Innovation in ICT; Field of Action 4– Broadband and Digital Service Infrastructure (https://www.comunicatii.gov.ro/agenda-digitala-pentru-romania-2020/).

The access to ICT equipment and Internet facilitates social inclusion, the rise in digital literacy and the improvement of digital competences.

The resolution of European parlament from 2018 as regards the education in the digital era (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/A-8-2018-0400_RO.html) underlines that digital skills acquisition requires a coherent, lifelong-learning approach anchored in formal, non-formal and informal education settings, with a policy response and targeted interventions appropriate to the needs of different age groups and learners. Also, the potential of digital technologies to support a shift towards more learner-centred pedagogical approaches is visible if incorporated into the learning process in a planned and purposeful way; believes that learners need to be guided towards innovative, bottom-up practices of knowledge creation for genuine educational transformation to occur. Last but not least, the report underlines that a transformation of the educational and training systems at all levels is necessary to make full use of the opportunities offered by information and communication technologies and the media and to develop the skills and competences required to meet the demands of the society and labour market of the future; reiterates that such a transformation must continue to guarantee the right to personal fulfilment, strike the right balance between the relevant digital skills and life skills, and support individual resilience, critical thinking and innovation potential.

The resolution also states that despite the potential of digitalisation for enhancing and fostering different and personalised learning methods, the impact of digital technologies on education itself has been limited. Moreover, investments in ICT in schools and training centres have not yet resulted in the transformation of educational practices. These aspects could be improved if teachers and trainers should be at the core of the digital transformation and therefore receive adequate initial preparation and continuous training, which must include modules on age- and development-oriented teaching practices.

The National Strategy on Digital Agenda for Romania 2020 (https://www.comunicatii.gov.ro/agenda-digitala-pentru-romania-2020/), included engagements taken in alignment with the Digital Agenda for Europe, according to the economic and social reality in Romania. Within the ICT field in education, the interventions to be implemented had been organized into three categories, according to the specific of the learning process : Education by curricular activity based on ICT; Education by extracurricular activity based on ICT; Continuous professional development (Life-Long-Learning) through ICT.

In this context, Romania engaged to provide school infrastrucure to achieve digital literacy for pupils, thus influencing the quality of the future human resources indirectly. The investments were meant to be implemented in order to reduce the differences between urban and rural areas. Also, „The existence of an ICT network in each school will also allow a better management of educational materials and facilitate students' access to information. Additionally, the implementation of an ICT infrastructure, complemented by the installation of educational software (for teaching, testing) will encourage the ICT-assisted teaching and will impose an objective evaluation of pupils' performances" (Strategia Naționala privind Agenda Digitală pentru România, 2020, p. 70).

The second strategic line of development anticipated the development of pupils', students', and teachers' digital competencies through ICT specific training courses for teachers and pupils. The third strategic line targeted the use of ICT (OER and Web2.0) in the learning process and within the Life-Long Learning process through creating an optimal frame of using Open Educational Resources (OER) through digitizing and archiving the educational content. The inclusion of Web2.0 platforms in the teaching-learning process, stimulates as such the learners' engagement in the learning process.

According to the National Strategy on Digital Agenda for Romania , the responsibility for the implementation of Field of Action II – ICT in Education falls upon The Ministry of National Education .

2.2. The phenomena of *e-inclusion and digital divide* in the educational system in the context of coronavirus pandemic worldwide

Social inclusion through *e-inclusion* and *digital literacy* represents an issue of national interest. Consideration is being given to the exclusion of some social categories and some geographical areas /zones from the benefits of new technologies, in other words the attenuation of the phenomenon of *digital divide* becomes a critical aspect in the evolution of the educational systems in the context of the quick pace of growth of Coronavirus pandemic.

E-inclusion refers to the set of provisions taken to develop an inclusive informational society, facilitating the access of everybody to digital resources and digital environment regardless social or personal background. (Gherguț, 2013) The phenomenon is associated to respecting fundamental principles of promoting diversity, respect, equal chances and right to education. In a more concrete aproach, e-inclusion refers to learning resources for education on internet.

Digital divide refers to socio-economic differences in using technologies, as an analysis made by OECD underlined the complexity of the phenomenon: „the gap between individuals, households, businesses and geographic areas at different socio-economic levels with regard both to their opportunities to access information and communication technologies (ICTs) and to their use of the Internet for awide variety of activities". (OECD, 2001, p. 5) The causes of digital divide are diverse: gender differences show that women are more disadvantaged than men in using technologies; the language gap as many pages and materials accessible on the internet in diverse forms use English more than any other language; socio-economic and cultural discrepancies, differences in educational mentality etc. (Petrică, 2015, pp. 3-4)

Digital divide phenomenon is highly present in the Romanian educational system although diverse national projects of technological investments in the system tried to reduce it. Contrary to such projects, numerous difficulties can be recorded about the efficiency of open educational resources implementation: the access of pupils from rural areas to technology (as technological support) through computers laptops, tablets, mobile phones, at school and at home; pupils and teachers' level of digital competences.

International media articles and reports underline the large gap between social and digital divide within school population, mainly concerning the difficulties to access digital resources in rural areas. (https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/technology/china-schools-coronavirus.html)

According to a national study, in Romania, the proportion "pupils /computer" was of 13 pupils to a computer, as compared to the European average rate of 5 pupils per computer (http://www.elearning.ro/accesul-la-internet-pentru-educatie-ce-inseamna-internet-de-mare-viteza-in-scoli).

2. Design of Research

2.1. The premises of the research

According to the UNESCO report published on the 5-th of March 2020, the number of children who miss school due to pandemic crise worldwide is unprecedented. The same report stresses the necessity of implementing programs and platforms for distance learning in order to support the educational system. (https://www.cnbc.com/2020/03/05/almost-300-million-kids-missing-school-because-of-the-coronavirus-unesco-says.html?&qsearchterm=coronavirus).

On the other hand, the pandemic growth emphasizes the digital divide through a high need for digital tools and open educational resources both at institutional level (open educational resources available in pre-university and higher education units), family level (on-line resources which can be available in the family), and also on personal level (pupils/students' willingness for on-line learning – motivational resources, individual learning techniques).

The regulation of on-line education during the state of an emergency period declared in many countries, ensures the legislative framework for continuing education in the on-line environment exclusively (*e-educational environment*). This fact underlines the necessity of developing an *inclusive e-educational environment*, in order to diminish the risk of school failure and to reduce school abandonment, a phenomenon hard to control even under normal circumstances.

2.2. The Purpose of Research

The implication of digital resources in the educational process suitable for the needs and necessities of the learners group stays a permanent challenge.
The aim of this study is to identify the technological coordinates of the virtual educational system developed in the Romanian education background in the period of coronavirus pandemic. We consider that the analysis of the technological support of learning constitutes the assumption of advancing an inclusive educational environment during the period in which educational activities are developed in the virtual space exclusively.

To that effect, we shall analyze the formal and informal offers of platforms, applications and tools which can be used in the virtual educational environment.

2.3. The Methodology of Research

In order to achieve the proposed goal, we completed a documentation type study, through the research of electronic resources offering information about the organization of on-line educational environment. The reseach implied 2 modalities of achievement:

- documentation through the analysis of open resources (Ministry of National Education site, universities site, pre-university units site)
- documentation through the analysis of informational resources (social networking, media)

2.4. The Analysis and Interpretation of Results

The Ministry of Education and Research launched the platform *Digital* (digital.educred.ro), which centralizes many types of digital resources and useful information in educational activities: digital tools, collaborative learning platforms, long-distance collaboration and communication tools, learning communities.

We identify recommandations of the Ministry for *platforms for class management, for learning resources and academic success*, such as: Google Classroom (for uploading materials, posting announcements), Microsoft Teams (for uploading materials and collaborative activities), Edmodo (communication and collaboration platform which allow parents to participate), Easyclass (materials, tests, diverse tasks, the products of pupils' activities can be scored and receive a fedback), Moodle (for higher education mainly). The list of recommandations also includes *platforms and applications* such as: Școala pe net, Digitaliada, iTeach, ReteauaEDU.ro, LearningPark, Livresq, MyKoolio, Kinderpedia.

Equally, the platform Digital recommends a list of *on-line tools for learning platforms:* Padlet (collaborative type multimedia virtual boards), Edpuzzle (creation or reuse of video content), Microsoft Powerpoint (online collaborative visual supports), Google slides (online collaborative visual supports), Bubbl.us (online collaborative conceptual maps), Voki (personalized virtual avatars), Miro (interactive board), Openboard (open source platform for interactive board, instituonal use).

The recommandation also implies the following *on-line communication tools*: Google Meet (video-conference-call platform), Microsoft Teams /Skype (digital hub which allows conversations, content, tasks and applications)**,** Zoom (video conference with real time messaging and content sharing), Webex (video conferences, online meetings, screen share and webinars), YouTube (online video content transmission).

Digital educational resources (digital manuals) are available for the pre-university level.

On a territory level, school inspectorates in collaboration with local communities promote their own OER (open educational resources). The offers of school inspectorates include numerous educational WEBsites (links), the most frequent being: ICT educational sites, educational sites in English, sites with on-line lessons for different themes /disciplines (mathematics, Romanian language and literature, foreign languages etc.). `

The educational units have been determined to take decisions and to implement different modalities of organizing educational activities in the on-line space. Some situations show clear decisions on the modalities of educational interaction. Universities and pre-university units readjust the manner of developing educational activities by using institutional accounts. However, in most situations, teachers and /or pupils /students used a wide range of virtual tools to intercept the educational interaction. Informational communication resources such as Whatsapp, Facebook Messenger, e-mail have become from simple informal communication tools, informational means of communicating educational contents (learning materials - doc., pdf., PPT, electronic archives etc.) and video /audio /written interaction means between teacher and pupil. The platforms in the category *free* resource - Google Meet, Zoom are the most used virtual environments in the educational interaction, especially in the situation when there are no institutional clear or /and restrictive regulations. Also, Drive service becomes a virtual space used for storing and mobility of information especially, among members of a community (class, work group, etc.)

The actions launched on a central level in order to provide a list of available educational resources in the on-line environment for pupils is supplemented through some visible informal resources in the public space. First, we can identify the TV national and territorial broadcasts, in collaboration with The Ministry of National Education and school inspectorates.

The offers in the informal environment focus on developing some free time activities context, by providing a complex volume of scientific materials, interactive games in many domains and develoment fields:

-Virtual library provided freely for users by Romanian printing houses (Humanitas, Institutul Cultural Român)

-Educational films and series offered freely by Netflix and YouTube channel;

-NASA offers a website with puzzles, colouring books, labyrinths, educational games (https://www.nasa.gov/kidsclub/index.html).

On-line offers for spending leisure time at home include: virtual tours and panoramic images in museums from Romania (http://www.cimec.ro/muzee/muzee-cu-tur-virtual.html); creative and entertaining games for children through the site creatissimo (http://www.creatissimo.ro/), geographical interactive games (https://geogra.ro/joc/ro/index.php).

3. Conclusions and discussion

The modalities of organizing the educational interaction are regional (in case of CSI), institutional (in case of some universities) or desultory (for the most part). The provisions taken on national level refer only to the ensurance of the learning environment for the pupils who will have to go in for the national exams (the exam of National Evaluation and Baccalaureate) by providing educational broadcasts through the national network TV system (Teleșcoala program), a model taken over by some school inspectorates at the level of pre-university education.

In the final analysis of this study, the list of on-line resources and tools cannot be considered a sufficient statistics. On the contrary, the internet abounds in open suggestions of educational resources which can be accessed as educational environments. It is obvious that, the evolution of pandemic on a nation and global level will favour the exploitation of the digital educational environment for an undeterminable period of time.

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THE EFFECTS OF GERONTOLOGY INTERVENTION PROGRAMME ON KNOWLEDGE AND ATTITUDE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract:
Introduction.*The way people especially the young ones understand ageing is often heavily influenced by films and television programmes where it is often scarier than the reality. To try and address this issue and get the young ones ready, this study was concluded to determine the effect of gerontology intervention programme on knowledge and attitude of secondary school students in Anambra State.*
Method.*The study was delimited to Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. Quasi-experimental pre-test, post-test control group design was used on 282 junior and senior secondary school students selected from four secondary schools which included two private schools and two public schools and they were divided into control and experimental groups. Research tool was a researcher-developed instrument which was divided into three parts. Data were analyzed using SPSS. Mean was used to answer the research questions; analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was used to answer the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.*
Result.*The results of the study showed that there was an increase in the mean knowledge and attitude scores of secondary school students after the gerontology intervention programme.*
Conclusion. *Based on the findings, conclusions were drawn and recommendations among others were made: there is a great need to expose students to the issue of ageing and health education on ageing process should also be taught in schools early enough.*
Keywords: ***effects; gerontology; knowledge; attitude.***

Introduction

The teaching-learning process is a live experience involving engagement with others in the acquisition of knowledge which could be organized as a programme of events or in the form of intervention programme. An educational programme is that in which students receive classroom instructions (Farlex, 2019). It is also a system of projects or services intended to meet a public need. The purpose of any educational programme is to make students aware of knowledge especially in the area of gerontology.

Gerontology is one of those teaching experiences that would enforce positive attitude and good knowledge to the younger generation. Gerontology may be regarded as the study of the social, cultural, psychological, cognitive and biological aspects of ageing (Community Portland college, 2019). Ageing is a series of biological changes that follow a natural progression from birth through maturity to old age and death. Some of the items to be included in gerontology as part of the objectives of gerontology includes expectations of the aged, challenges of the aged, signs of ageing, quality diet for advancing age, major health problems affecting the ageing, population, life styles and conditions that promote premature and unhealthy ageing (Okonkwor, 2015). All these are included in the ageing process and must be studied under gerontology.

Ageing process brings about social and emotional changes and loss into our life (Area Agency on Ageing, 2013). In an effort to prepare for the increasing demand of the growing number of older adults, younger students must gain an understanding of the impact of the ageing process in their lives, their families and society as a whole through adequate knowledge (Davis & Bennett, 2015). Knowledge in gerontology is needed for planning and developing programmes and services which would improve the quality of life of older population. Dubois et al. noted some of the goals of gerontology to include: providing academic programmes and experiences through courses and field experiences, providing inter-disciplinary education and training that meet the diverse needs of older people, preparing students as generalist gerontologists for careers in a variety of gerontological settings. Also such early education has the potential to reverse negative stereotypes and increase interest in gerontology from a younger age. Therefore, since getting old is an inevitable process that everyone must pass through at some point and also the benefits that comes through the study of ageing process, this study is designed to determine the effects of gerontology intervention programme on knowledge and attitude of secondary school students in Anambra State. Also some variables moderated the study such as gender and class level of the students.

Method

The design for the study was a quasi-experimental pre-test-post-test with control group design. A quasi-experimental is an empirical intervention study used to estimate the causal impact of an intervention on target population without random assignment. The area of the study was Awka South Local Government Area of Anambra State. It has a population of 250,900 people and it is both urban and rural in nature with schools located at every location. The population of the study consisted of 584,284 junior and senior secondary school students in Anambra State. This figure is both private and public schools. And all the schools used were mixed gender school because private schools do not practice single gender schools. The sample of the study was 282 junior and senior secondary school students drawn from the four secondary schools used for the study. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to get the number of students listed above. Sampling started with getting the four schools that is two public and two private schools. One of the public schools was the experimental group school while one was control group school; the same thing goes for the private schools. Each school has both junior class and senior class. The instrument for data collection was a Gerontology Knowledge Test and Attitude Questionnaire (GKTAQ). It is a researcher developed instrument, with three sections. Section A was the demographic data, Section B the knowledge test and Section C the attitude questions. The instrument was validated by three experts. The reliability of the instrument was established using Kudder-Richardson (K-1220) for the knowledge test and got a reliability co-efficient of .80 and Cronbach Alpha's for the attitude questions and also got a reliability coefficient of 0.925.

Intervention Procedure for Experimental Group and Control Group

Permission was granted by the various principals of the four schools used for the study so that gerontology would be included in their time-table so that it does not affect the students' class time and also the result of the research. The experimental group was exposed to 12 weeks on gerontology; a pre-test was given to both the control and experimental group at the first contact after the 12 weeks of studies the post-test was also administered to them. The control group schools had a different lesson not on gerontology but on civic education and national values. In order to control the extraneous variables intact classes was used and the same content (lesson) was taught. The post-test items was re-shuffled and renumbered before use for the post-test.

The data collected was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS). Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions. The differences between the pre-test mean and the post-test mean was regarded as the mean differences scores. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) was used to test all the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. When the post-test score is higher than the pre-test score, there is a mean gain but when the pre-test score is higher than the post-test, there is a mean loss.

Research Questions

1)What are the mean knowledge scores of secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

2)What is the mean knowledge scores of male and female secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

3)What are the mean knowledge scores of senior and junior secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

4)What are the mean attitude scores of secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

5)What are the mean attitude scores of male and female secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

6)What are the mean attitude scores of senior and junior secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

Hypotheses

1)The effect of gerontology intervention programme on the health knowledge scores of secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

2)The effects of gerontology intervention programme on the health knowledge scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

3)The effects of gerontology intervention programme on the health knowledge scores of private and public secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

4)The effect of gerontology intervention programme on health attitude scores of secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

5)The effect of gerontology intervention programme on health attitude scores by male and female secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

6)The effect of gerontology Intervention programme on the health attitude scores of public and private secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Research Question 1: What are the mean knowledge scores of secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

Table 1: Pre-test and Post-test Mean Knowledge Scores of Students in Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source of Variation	n	Pretest $\bar{X}$	SD	Posttest $\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$ Difference
Experimental Group	163	19.04	3.42	20.02	3.16	0.98
Control Group	119	19.78	3.02	19.34	3.51	-0.44

Table 1 reveals the pre-test and post-test mean knowledge scores of secondary school students in experimental group to be 19.04 and 20.02 with a gained mean of 0.98 while the control group had 19.74, 19.34 and -0.44 as mean pre-test, post-test and mean loss scores respectively. This shows that the experimental group had better mean knowledge score than their counterparts control group.

Research Question 2: What is the mean knowledge scores of male and female secondary school students in both experimental and control before and after gerontology intervention programme?

Table 2: Pre-test and Post-test Mean Knowledge Scores of Male and Female Students in Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source of Variation	Gender	n	Pretest X	SD	Posttest X	SD	X Difference
Experimental Group	Male	73	18.37	3.44	20.16	3.29	1.79
	Female	90	19.58	3.32	20.79	3.04	1.21
Control Group	Male	62	19.77	3.49	19.71	3.69	-0.06
	Female	57	19.79	2.48	18.95	3.30	-0.84

Table 2 shows the pre-test and post-test mean knowledge scores of 18.37 and 20.16 for male and 19.58 and 20.79 for female students in experimental group. The male students had a general mean score of 1.79 while their female counterparts had 1.21. On the other hand, male students in control group had 19.77, 19.71 and -0.16 as their pre-test, post-test and mean loss scores respectively while the female had 19.79, 18.95 and -0.84 as pre-test, post-test and mean loss scores respectively. This shows that male and female students in the experimental group had better mean knowledge scores than the male and female in the control groups.

Research Question 3: What are the mean knowledge scores of senior and junior secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

Table 3: Pre-test and Post-test Mean Knowledge Scores of Senior and Junior Secondary Students in Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source of Variation	Education Level	n	Pretest X	SD	Posttest X	SD	X Difference
Experimental Group	SS2	50	20.14	2.81	21.90	2.22	1.76
	JS2	113	18.55	3.56	19.89	3.32	1.34
Control Group	SS2	57	20.82	2.41	20.30	2.89	-0.52
	JS2	62	18.82	3.25	18.47	3.82	-0.35

Table 3 highlights the pre-test and post-test mean knowledge scores of 20.14 and 21.90 for SS2 students and 18.55 and 19.89 for JS2 students in experimental groups. The SS2 students had a mean gained score of 1.76 while their counterparts in JS2 had 1.34. Also SS2 students in control group had 20.82, 20.30 and -0.52 as their pre-test, post-test and mean loss score respectively while their counterparts in JS2 had 18.82, 18.42 and -0.35 as pre-test, post-test and mean loss scores respectively. This indicated that SS2 and JS2 students in the experimental group had better mean knowledge scores than the control group.

Research Question 4: What are the mean attitude scores of secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

Table 4: Pre-test and Post-test Mean Attitude Scores of Students in Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source of Variation	n	Pretest $\bar{X}$	SD	Posttest $\bar{X}$	SD	Difference $\bar{X}$
Experimental Group	163	88.00	10.53	92.76	10.99	4.76
Control Group	119	88.98	12.10	89.51	12.16	0.53

The result in Table 4 reveals the pre-test and post-test mean attitude scores of secondary school students in experimental group to be 88.00 and 92.76 with a gained mean of 4.76 while the control group had 88.98, 89.51 and 0.53 as mean pre-test, post-test and mean gained scores respectively. Both the mean post-test score and gained mean attitude scores of students in experimental group were better than that of the control group.

Research Question 5: What are the mean attitude scores of male and female secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

Table 5: Pre-test and Post-test Mean Attitude Scores of Male and Female Students in Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source of Variation	Gender	n	Pretest $\bar{X}$	SD	Posttest $\bar{X}$	SD	Difference $\bar{X}$
Experimental Group	Male	73	87.92	11.12	91.21	11.13	3.29
	Female	90	88.07	10.08	94.02	10.78	5.95
Control Group	Male	62	88.42	10.16	87.60	10.11	-0.82
	Female	57	89.60	13.97	91.60	13.86	2.00

Table 5 showed the pre-test and post-test mean attitude scores of 07.92 and 9`1.21 for msale and 88.07 and 94.02 for female students in experimental group. The male students had a gained mean score of 3.29 while their female counterparts had 5.95. Also male students in control group had 88.42, 87.60 and -0.82 as their pre-test, post-test and mean loss scores respectively while their female counterparts had 89.60, 91.60 and 2.00 as pre-test, post-test and mean gained scores respectively. This shows that the male and female students in the experimental group had better attitude toward gerontology than male and female students in the control group.

Research Question 6: What are the mean attitude scores of senior and junior secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme?

Table 6: Pre-test and Post-test Mean Attitude Scores of Senior and Junior Secondary School Students in Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source of Variation	Class Level	n	Pretest X	SD X	Posttest	SD	X Difference
Experimental Group	SS2	50	88.26	10.80	93.10	9.74	4.84
	JS2	113	87.88	10.45	92.61	11.54	4.73
Control Group	SS2	57	89.25	9.29	90.04	11.90	0.70
	JS2	62	88.74	14.27	89.03	12.48	0.29

The table shows the pre-test and post-test mean attitude scores of 88.26 and 93.10 for SS2 students and 87.88 and 92.61 for JS2 students in the experimental group. The SS2 students had a gained mean score of 4.84 while their counterparts in JS2 had 4.73. Also SS2 students in control group had 89.25, 90.04 and 0.70 as their pre-test, post-test and gained mean score respectively while their counterparts in JS2 had 88.74, 89.03 and 0.29 as pre-test, post-test and gained mean score respectively. This shows that SS2 and JS2 of the experimental group had better attitude.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis 1: The effect of gerontology intervention programme on the health knowledge scores of secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

Table 7: Summary of ANCOVA of the Mean Knowledge Scores of Students in Both Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source of Variation	**Class Level**	**n**	**Pretest X**	**SD**	**Posttest X**	**SD**	**X Difference**
Corrected Model	1500.176		2	750.088	125.560		.000
Intercept	333.384		1	333.384	55.806		.000
Pretest	1406.875		1	1406.875	235.501		.000
Group	190.885		1	190.885	31.953		.000
Error	1666.736		279	5.974			
Total	116167.000		282				

Table 7 shows that there was a significant difference between the mean knowledge scores of secondary school students in both experimental and control groups after gerontology intervention programme. F, (1,279) = 31.953, $p < 0.05$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 2: The effects of gerontology intervention programme on the health knowledge scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

Table 8: Summary of ANCOVA of the Mean Knowledge Scores of Male and Female Students in Both Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source	SS	*df*	MS	F	*p*.value
Corrected Model	1315.932	2	657.966	99.176	.000
Intercept	400.993	1	400.993	60.442	.000
Pretest	1314.931	1	1314.931	198.201	.000
Gender	6.642	1	6.642	1.001	.318
Error	1850.979	279	6.634		
Total	116167.000	282			

Analysis in Table 8 shows that there was no significant difference between the mean knowledge scores of male and female secondary school students in both experimental and control groups after gerontology intervention programme. F, (1,279) = 1.001, $p > 0.05$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was therefore accepted.

Hypothesis 3: The effect of gerontology intervention programme on health knowledge scores of senior and junior secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

Table 9: Summary of ANCOVA of the Mean Knowledge Scores of Senior and Junior Secondary School Students in Both Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source	SS	*df*	MS	F	*p*.value
Corrected Model	1500.176	2	750.088	125.560	.000
Intercept	333.384	1	333.384	55.806	.000
Pretest	1406.875	1	1406.875	235.501	.000
Group	190.885	1	190.885	31.953	.000
Error	1666.736	279	5.974		
Total	116167.000	282			

Table 9 shows that there was no significant difference between the mean knowledge scores of senior and junior secondary school students in both experimental and control groups after gerontology intervention programme. F, (1,279) = 2.042, $p>0.05$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was therefore accepted.

Hypothesis 4: The effects of gerontology intervention programme on the health attitude scores of secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

Table 10: Summary of ANCOVA of the Mean Attitude Scores of Students in Both Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source	SS	*df*	MS	F	*p*.value
Corrected Model	6894.726	2	3447.363	31.159	.000
Intercept	12955.116	1	12955.116	117.093	.000
Pretest	6169.033	1	6169.033	55.758	.000
Group	919.458	1	919.458	8.310	.004
Error	30868.366	279	110.639		
Total	2393068.000	282			

Table 10 shows that there was a significant difference between the mean attitude scores of secondary school students in experimental and control groups after gerontology intervention programme. F, (1,279) = 8.310, $p<0.05$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 5: The effects of gerontology intervention programme on health attitude scores of male and female secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

Table 11: Summary of ANCOVA of the Mean Attitude Scores of Male and Female Students in Both Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source	SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*.value
Corrected Model	6752.713	2	3376.356	30.377	.000
Intercept	13553.698	1	13553.698	121.942	.000
Pretest	5874.078	1	5874.078	52.849	.000
Gender	777.444	1	777.444	6.995	.009
Error	31010.380	279	111.148		
Total	2393068.000	282			

Analysis in Table 11 shows that there was a significant difference between the mean attitude scores of male and female secondary school students in both experimental and control groups after gerontology intervention programme. F, (1,279) = 6.995, $p<0.05$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was therefore rejected.

Hypothesis 6: The effects of gerontology intervention programme on health attitude scores of senior and junior secondary school students in Anambra State will not differ significantly using their post mean scores.

Table 12: Summary of ANCOVA of the Mean Attitude Scores of Junior and Senior Students in Both Experimental and Control Groups Before and After Gerontology Intervention Programme (n = 282).

Source	SS	*df*	MS	*F*	*p*.value
Corrected Model	5976.241	2	2988.121	26.227	.000
Intercept	13389.165	1	13389.188	117.520	.000
Pretest	5975.213	1	5975.213	52.446	.000
Class Level	.973	1	.973	.009	.926
Error	31786.851	279	113.931		
Total	2393068.000	282			

Table 12 shows that there was no significant difference between the mean attitude scores of senior and junior secondary school students in both experimental and control groups after gerontology intervention programme. F, (1,279) = .009, $p>0.05$. The null hypothesis of no significant difference between the two groups was therefore accepted.

Discussion

The findings of the study showed that gerontology intervention programme had an effect on the knowledge and attitude of the students as shown by the positive values of mean gained scores of students in the experimental group. This increase in knowledge scores was as a result of the intervention programme while the control group had mean loss because of exposure to such intervention programme. The null hypothesis of no significant difference was rejected.

The result from the study showed the male students in the experimental group had better mean knowledge score compared to the females in the same group.

This result was in line with the findings of the study of Dennis, Muller, Miller and Banerjee (2004) that males score were higher compared to those of females, but disagreed with their hypotheses on high significant differences between the mean knowledge scores of male and female students in both experimental and control groups after the gerontology intervention programme was therefore rejected for this study. The result must have been so because male students are more likely to engage in risky behaviours but when they are exposed to know the pros and cons of their behaviour in relation to ageing, they might pay attention to the intervention.

The findings of this study revealed that private school students in the experimental group had higher mean gained knowledge score of 1.84 than those in the public schools. The finding of the study was so because private schools are better organized in terms of academic activities than the public schools and also due to the proper management of, and well organized academic setting, students are motivated to learn in a well and rewarding academic environment than the environment where students are not properly controlled due to attitude of teachers which are mostly experienced in public schools. Private schools performed better both in the experimental and control groups. Also the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean knowledge scores of public and private secondary school students in both experimental and control groups after the intervention programme was rejected.

The findings of the study revealed to a large extent a positive effect of gerontology intervention programme. The improved attitude of the experimental group school showed that the programme was effective and a negative attitude was revealed among the control group school because of lack of intervention programme.

The finding of the study showed that male and female students in the experimental group had higher mean gained attitude scores than those in the control group; though the female students had higher mean gained attitude scores than the male students in experimental group. This is because the females are closer to the aged and elderly people than the male students; some of them are taken as nannies, house helps and servants to take care of the elderly people. The null hypothesis of no significant difference in the mean attitude scores of male and female secondary school students in both experimental and control groups after gerontology intervention programme was rejected.

The results of the study also showed that public and private schools students had higher mean gained attitude scores with the public schools higher than the private schools. This is because most of the students in the public schools live with either an aged person or an elderly person. Also the null hypothesis of no significant difference between the mean attitude scores of public and private secondary school students in both experimental and control groups before and after gerontology intervention programme was rejected.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions were made. Gerontology intervention programme is an effective way of educating students on issues related to ageing. The results of this study have established the fact that gerontology intervention programme has positive effect on ageing knowledge and attitude of secondary school students. A general increase in gerontology knowledge and attitudes mean scores of the students were observed after the intervention programme which was showed in the mean gained scores especially the experimental group male and female students in the experimental group, the public and private secondary school students had a higher mean gained score: the mean goes for mean gained attitude scores of experimental group.

This increase in knowledge and attitude for the experimental group indicates the need that gerontology intervention programme should be discussed and taught in every school because that was the cause of low knowledge and negative attitude in the control group secondary school students.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings and conclusions of the study:

1)There is a great need to expose students to the issue of ageing because it will help to alleviate the fear of getting old in them.

2)Issues related to ageing should be discussed with children so that they could be of help to the older one not seeing it as punishment but as a stage in life.

3)Gerontology should be taught both formally and informally to children.

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Abstract: *The new educations are adapting to the present, and are connected as a priority to the future, to the possible challenges of the evolution of the world. The new educations represent, in a way, a contour of the pedagogical current affirmed at the beginning of the twentieth century, under the name of "New education", which was centered on the renewal of the educative-educated methodological report. The new educations are focused, in particular, on new objectives and messages, which determine the contents and strategies of education in the conditions of the contemporary world. Through the questionnaire-based survey method, the study centralizes and analyzes the opinions of 52 students, future teachers, related to the implementation of new education in pre-university education. The 14-item questionnaire is its own conception, and includes questions regarding three areas of interest: the presence / absence of new education in its own formation of future teachers, barriers and their benefits in the current education system, respectively, the role of new education in developing skills the students. By analyzing the answers given by the future teachers, we can conclude that they like the integration of the new education in the pre-university education, consider that they contribute to the development of the social competences of the students, increase the capacity of their responsibility, facilitate the stimulation of the creativity and contribute to the training of the skills of technological means.*

Keywords: *opinions; future teachers; new educations; integration.*

Theoretical framework

As a subsystem of society, education must respond to the increasingly complex challenges of the present and future world, entering into structural and functional connections with its systems and components: economic, political, cultural, religious, community demographic, etc., which is relevant. its transformative functions on human knowledge and behavior (Cristea, S., 2008). Education thus appears as a set of actions for shaping the human being in relation to a multitude of social life factors and demands imposed by general social progress. A quality education is focused not only on adapting to the current imperatives, it is oriented towards the future, thus being anticipatory.

Regarding the procedural aspect of the educational approach, there are voices that warn us about the need for resizing and even changes of educational paradigms. (Botkin, Elmandjra, Malita 1981, p.26-71) achieve an interesting dissociation between maintenance learning and innovative learning, which may suggest possible paths for the present and future of education. Maintenance learning is meant to provide the functioning of an existing system, of a known way of life, and stimulates the individual's ability to solve given problems, but also to perpetuate a certain cultural experience. Innovative learning, Botkin argues, is meant to prepare individuals and societies to act in new situations, and implies the qualities of autonomy and integration. Intercultural education, in the context of migration and coexistence, seems to be topical (Jones, Kimberley, 1989). Although societies become multicultural, educational systems remain rigid, adapted to monocultural situations, education for and in a united world must cultivate values such as respect, tolerance, mutual respect, belief in cultural equality or complementarity, unversalising some differences, in favor of better communication or coexistence.

For the future, the goals of education must be infused with cultural connotations. The world decade of cultural development (1988-1997), decreed by UNESCO and the UN (according to resolution 41/187, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1986), forces the school to orient itself towards cultivating authentic universal values. The aforementioned program is articulated around four major objectives:

- taking into account the cultural dimension of development;
- asserting and enriching cultural identities;
- broadening everyone's participation in cultural life;
- promoting international cultural cooperation.

The modeling of human personality, in the perspective of the fiancées, defined at macro and microstructural level, was expressed in several pedagogical expressions that emphasized the unitary character of the training activities. The formula "dimensions of education" is increasingly embraced by theorists, expressing the systemic, multidimensional and dynamic character of the training activity. In this sense, five dimensions of education are devoted: moral, intellectual, tehnological, aesthetic and physical education, these being approached as general contents of education that have an objective, unitary, dynamic and open character (Cristea, S., 2003).

The problem of the contemporary world, characterized by universality, globality, complexity and priority character (Văideanu, 1988, p. 106), is increasingly demonstrating that the most efficient solutions cannot be found through the sequential employment approach, but are based on a holistic vision of the great problems facing humanity.

Studies of educational prospective suggest the following essential coordinates (Vaniscotte, cited by Stanciu, 1999):

• the laboratory school: whose essential purpose is the processing and transmission of the cultural experience of mankind;

• school-business model: the out-put offered by the school must be efficient and capable of competition;

• the school integrated in a socio-cultural ecosystem;

• technology-oriented school: it would lead to the multiplication of learning places;

• school based on differentiated pedagogies;

To meet the challenges of the contemporary world, the following directions of restructuring the educational reality are outlined (Stan, 2001):

• ensuring an optimal balance between the informative dimension (knowledge and information transmitted in the educational process) and the formative dimension (construction and development of attitudes, values or behaviors);

• introduction of new types of education;

• ensuring a judicious distribution and a balance between the two types of learning: maintenance and innovation;

• the progressive imposition of the principles of the new educational paradigm (Wurtz, 1992, quoted by Cucoș, 1999);

• extending the educational act to the whole life of the individual.

The analysis of the contemporary issues and the identification of the major topics of mediation have led to the creation, in educational plan, of specific answers, by enhancing the new education, or of new types of contents: education for peace, ecological education, education for participation and democracy, education for change and development, education for communication and the media, education for leisure, education for human rights, education for a new community order, etc. it is expected that this list will change, either through the disappearance of some education, or by imposing new requirements and content.

As practical ways of introducing "new education", Văideanu (1988) mentions three possibilities by:

a. introducing new disciplines focused on a certain type of education

b. creating specific modules within the traditional disciplines

c. the technique "approche infusionnelle (the infusion of messages related to the new contents in the classical disciplines).

The solution of solving the current problems must come not only from the institutionalized education. Today, the objectives of education and the educational processes are so complex that only a concentration of the efforts undertaken by several institutions, materialized in the "educational fortress" (Faure, 1974, p.225), through the redistribution of education, which could be several factors. create actions whose results would be satisfying. of course, such restructuring is difficult, problematic, and as some analysts suggest (Sicinski, 1984, p. 226), a deeper rethinking and correlation of school, cultural, economic and social policies at the societal level.

The multidisciplinary character of the contents of the "new education" is complemented by the appropriate differentiation of the situations achieved in school and out-of-school, didactic and non-teaching contexts. In this sense, the resources of pedagogical projections of several types of curriculum are exploited: common (formal, non-formal, informal), hidden; compulsory, available to the school.

Perspectives

The school is a good provider for the integration of new education, a central place of change, of changing mindsets. The school, as the main educational agent, among others, has the role of equipping young people with a critical sense, with the ability to adequately understand and respond to the various challenges of the society, to become more and more agents of their own training, to be organize, structure their knowledge by themselves, having formed the judgment and the future responsibility.

To what extent, the school as a living institution has fulfilled this role of training and adapting the pupils / young people to the new one, but also if the future teachers are willing to contribute to the construction of the future in terms of developing an education system designed from the perspective for this future, they are basic benchmarks in the elaboration of the present study. Thus, the question arises: have future teachers benefited from these changes in education? Are they ready, willing and sharing this vision of change?

Methodology

The methodology of capitalizing on new education covers all dimensions (intellectual, moral, technological, aesthetic, physical) and the forms (formal, non-formal, informal) of education. The triggered process stimulates the transition from the specific steps to the global, interdisciplinary approaches, which allow the deepening of some social problems that require concrete solutions: peace, democracy, social justice, development, environment, nutrition, health, protecting children and young people, promoting education. The implementation of the new education implies the elaboration and application of special pedagogical and social strategies.

Through the questionnaire-based survey method, the study centralizes and analyzes the opinions of 52 students, future teachers, related to the implementation of new education in pre-university education. The questionnaire is its own conception, and includes questions regarding three areas of interest: the presence /

absence of new education in its own formation of future teachers, barriers and their benefits in the current education system, respectively, the role of new education in the development of student skills.

From the 14 items in the questionnaire, 3 represent identification variables, 5 items offer the possibility of future teachers to select variants of answers, each response giving the possibility of a clear and relevant statistical analysis, and the other 6 items offer personal opinions of the future teachers.

Of the reference questions, we mention: *Do you consider it appropriate to introduce new education into the educational act ?, You name 3 competences of the students who, by participating in the activities in the new education, would develop, improve, Consider that in the implementation of the new education in the education is it necessary to collaborate with other partners ?, Name those types of education that you encountered during your schooling, Which form of implementation of new education do you consider optimal ?, Identify at least 3 barriers in the implementation of new education in pre-university education, Name 3 characteristics that, in your vision, should characterize the viola school, etc.*

From the careful analysis of the questionnaires we can conclude the following:

- Although all the future teachers who completed the questionnaire were female, there was a change in the age category, so 82% of the students are between 20 and 25 years old, 14% are between 25 and 30 years old, and the remaining 4% are over 30 years old;

- Reported on the identification of new education in their own training, 59% of students say that during the schooling they met Environmental Education. It should be mentioned that this high percentage may be correlated with the age of the students, possibly graduates of recent promotions. 7% said that, when they were students, their teachers approached activities that were closely linked to ecological education, and 3% said that they had activities related to intercultural education. On the other hand, 31% found that during the schooling they did not encounter activities that were related to the new dimensions of education (Figure 1);

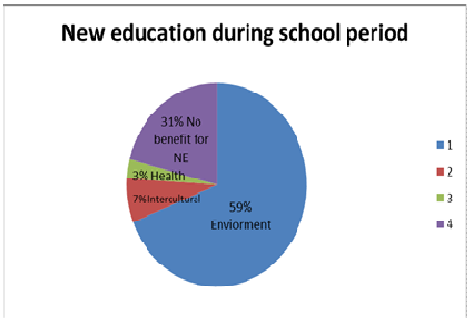

Figure 1:NE during school period

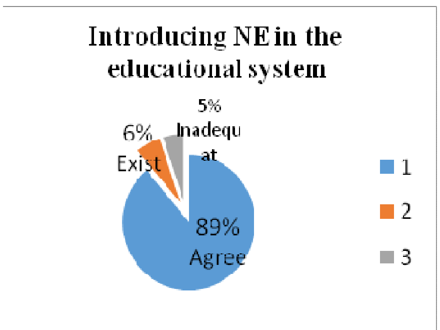

Figure 2: Introducing NE in the educational system

- Regarding the item regarding the opportunity of introducing new education into the education system, 89% of students consider this aspect to be impetuously necessary, 6% claim that these educations are already found in the didactic activities, and 5% consider that these dimensions of education is not required (Figure 2);

- Among the competences of the students that can be developed, improved as a result of participating in various activities within the new education, the questioned students identified: communication and interrelation skills, social skills, analytical and judgment skills, ethical and moral skills;

- Identifying the students' opinion on how they are organized, 76% considered that the implementation of the activities regarding the new education is more efficient if it is carried out in collaboration with other external partners. Of these potential partners we mention: other state institutions (museum, library), institutions providing community services (medical offices), other associations, non-governmental organizations, etc.13% of future teachers stated that in designing and organizing activities in which to find the new dimensions of education it is not necessary to involve other parties, other educating adults, but the realization of these activities is within the power of the teacher. And on the other hand, 11% of future staff are undecided;

- As a form of implementation of new education in the didactic activity, future teachers (51%) consider that the most appropriate would be through a module, an optional one made through a curriculum at the school's decision. On the other hand, 22% of future teachers consider that the new dimensions of education can be addressed through extracurricular, non-formal activities. 17% of the students surveyed consider that the activities aimed at integrating new education into the teaching process can only be achieved through educational partners, and 10% do not yet have a clear vision on how to implement the new education (Figure 3);

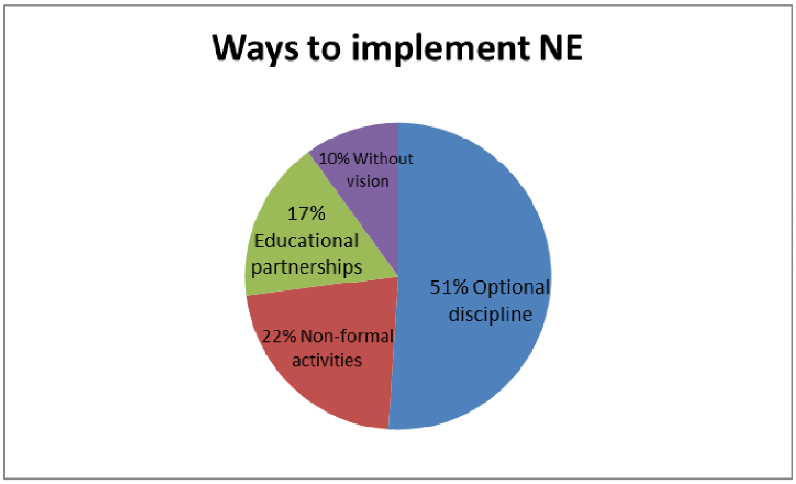

Figure 3: Ways To implement NE in the opinion of future teachers

- Compared to the frequency of organizing activities that include the dimensions of new education, most of the students (78%) questioned consider that it is appropriate for them to be carried out periodically, at the assessment of the teacher, month, 6% consider that such activities should be carried out weekly, 12% consider that these activities can be performed once a month, and 4% cannot appreciate the frequency with which these activities could be organized/ performed (Figure 4);

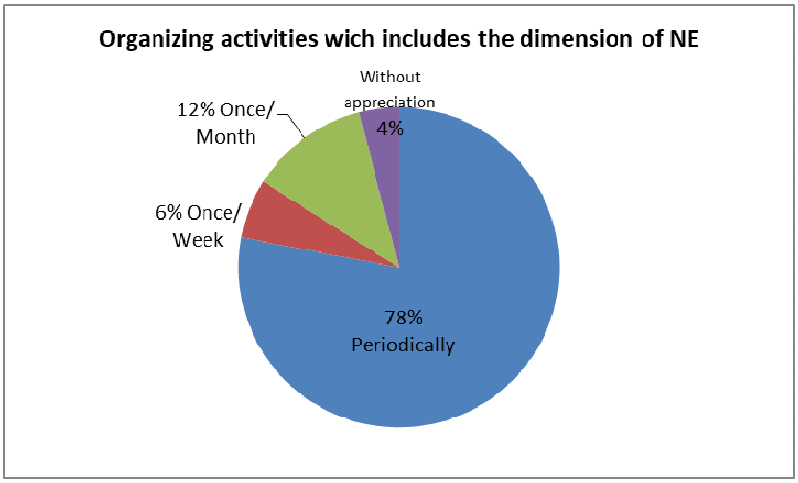

Figure 4: The frequency of organizing activities wich include the dimension of NE

- Regarding the item that asked for the assessment of the students questioned regarding the naming of barriers that may arise, which can negatively influence the organization of educational activities (formal, non-formal or informal) in relation to the new education, they named: the poor motivation of the teachers , lack of adequate materials, incorrect identification of educational partnerships, lack of time of students, busy schedule, rigid schedule, lack of support from parents and decision-makers regarding the good functioning of the school institution;

- On the item regarding the identification of some characteristics that, in the opinion of the future teachers, would characterize the school of the future, we mention: optimization of the school syllabus, introduction of more recreational activities, digitization of school textbooks, promotion of the benefits of interculturality, greater emphasis on education for morality and education for spending free time, improving / adapting learning spaces;

Conclusions

As a conclusion we can say that, the graduates of the 2018 promotions, during their own schooling benefited from activities within the new education, but the graduates of the previous generations did not have the same privilege. However, all the students questioned expressed their interest in facilitating the introduction of new education in pre-university education by developing partnerships within the community, by implementing non-formal activities or by facilitating an optional module offered in the curriculum at the school's decision. Regarding the barriers, the obstacles that underlie the integration of new education in pre-university education, we concluded that the future teachers consider the insufficiency of the temporary space allocated to the disciplines that are not included in the school syllabus, as a main obstacle, respectively the lack of interest of the teachers in relation to the transformations reported to the teachers, triggered by reference activities within the new education, as a secondary obstacle.

Future teachers agree the integrational process of the new education in pre-university education, believes that they contribute to the development of the social skills of the students, increases their capacity of responsibility, facilitates the stimulation of creativity and contributes to the formation of the abilities to use the technological means.

Discussions

Investment in education is the investment in the future of the nation, it should be at the base of the development of society. As an anticipatory activity, oriented towards the future, education will be all the more effective as it will be based more on the prospecting of social revolution, and will propose projects, models and tools for human formation for a changing context.

The formation of the human capacity to form competences, becomes a purpose and a priority of the contemporary educational systems. Thus, the need to rethink, restructure the entire education system, at the level of the relationships between formal, non-formal and informal education, self-education, lifelong learning, etc.

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LITERATURE REVIEW FOR HATE SPEECH PERPETUATION WITH REGARDS TO EMPOWERMENT THEORIES - FREIRE'S THEORY OF EMPOWERMENT OR THE PEDAGOGY OF THE OPPRESSED

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Abstract: *To tackle psychological sources of hate speech, our project Hate's Journey, financed by Erasmus+, 2018-2-ES02-KA205-011733 has designed an online questionnaire composed by some single item research questions, general data collection and tests regarding emotional regulation, internet content awareness and helping attitudes. The hypothesis of this research is that the revenge thinking pattern and ignoring attitude towards the negative effects of hate speech are powerful predictors of future online perpetrator pattern of hate speech. The revenge thinking pattern and ignoring attitude towards the negative effects of hate speech are powerful predictors of future online perpetrator pattern of hate speech. These results suggest that if an individual is enveloped by a thinking pattern built on revenge and if the level of ignorance is high (regarding the negative effects of one's actions), then there is a possibility of the individual to engage in a form of hate speech. In the quest of* [‡‡‡‡‡‡‡‡‡]*matching these new results with a suitable theoretical framework, the pedagogy of the oppressed thinking felt more appropriate.*

Keywords: *hate speech; empowerment theories; Pedagogy of the Oppressed;*

1. Introduction

To tackle psychological sources of hate speech, our project Hate's Journey, financed by Erasmus+, 2018-2-ES02-KA205-011733 has designed an online questionnaire composed by some single item research questions, general data collection and tests regarding emotional regulation, internet content awareness and helping attitudes. The hypothesis of this research is that the revenge thinking pattern and ignoring attitude towards the negative effects of hate speech are powerful predictors of future online perpetrator pattern of hate speech. Research's 206 participants are residents of Latvia in 24.8%, Romania 24.8%, Spain 24.8%, and

Turkey 25.7%, with an age mean of m=30 years, 39.8% males and 60.2% females (Rad, D., Demeter, E., 2019).

A multiple linear regression was calculated to predict the online hate speech perpetrator pattern. As results show, revenge thinking pattern (B=0.365, SE=0.082, Beta=0.317, t=4.452 at a $p < 0.001$) and ignoring attitude towards the negative effects of hate speech (B=0.233, SE=0.076, Beta=0.219, t=3.076 at a $p < 0.005$) are significant predictors of hate speech perpetrator pattern (Kelemen, G., et al., 2019).

Thus, the revenge thinking pattern and ignoring attitude towards the negative effects of hate speech are powerful predictors of future online perpetrator pattern of hate speech. These results suggest that if an individual is enveloped by a thinking pattern built on revenge and if the level of ignorance is high (regarding the negative effects of one's actions), then there is a possibility of the individual to engage in a form of hate speech.

In the quest of matching these new results with a suitable theoretical framework, the pedagogy of the oppressed thinking felt more appropriate.

The analysis we will further present on Paulo Freire is motivated by a special interest that awakens his personality. For us, he presents himself as a man capable of living his time intensely, of formulating a serious analysis of the reality that he has lived, an analysis that may or may not be shared, of giving his life a social sense and of service to those most in need, that is, to live actively, critically and rationally as a person in constant seek for true, concrete and real liberation.

Freire is the type of person who knew how to recognize the value of the human. It is the type of personality that manages to discover the mystery that man holds with its complexity and always in search and self-construction. He has the clarity to recognize that, despite his personal capacity, man is not alone in the world, but is an eminently relational being.

The analysis will firstly begin with a contextualization of Freire. This aims to depict the situation in which the author lived and what were the circumstances that motivated the creation of his educational response.

Secondly we will present how Freire's work is an attempt at a practical and culturally situated response that seeks to make humankind recognize own dignity, and the strength it contains once it is discovered. Thirdly we will present the method created by Freire, and a brief example of its concrete application.

Lastly we will make a connection between Freire's thinking and what is currently believed to be education.

1.1. Historical context of Freire's pedagogy

In order to understand what Freire means and what he proposes as education, it is essential to know the context he has lived in, since it is from here that his proposals arise. Freire is an author who expresses his intellectual influences, filling them with new content, where his particular way of dialoging with reality is outlined.

Freire's work contains the new and revolutionary ideas that emerged in Latin America in the ‘60s. On one hand, he gives an account of his Catholic formation imbued with liberationist language from the progressive currents of Catholicism, which give rise to liberation theology. His existential Christian affiliation is explicit and, in addition, he uses elements of the Marxist dialectic that give him a vision and understanding of history.

In the period in which he writes, he contemplates the traumas and difficulties that the great majority of the peasant men of the north of Brazil (northeast) went through, as a result of an alienating education that leads the people to live their condition of misery and exploitation with a great passivity and silence. The culture of the Northeast people has been considered as a vision without value, which must be forgotten and changed by a culture, that of the ruling classes, valued as good, and that is transmitted by all available means. The poor people are treated as ignorant and are convinced of this, which explains the passivity towards the situation of slavery in which they live in.

Faced with this reality, Freire argues that people must be participants in the transformation of the world through a new education that helps them be critical of their own reality and leads them to value this experience as something full of real value.

Brazil is a country that throughout its history has been under the influence of other cultures. People have not developed a capacity for criticism that would allow them to free themselves from cultural submission.

The Brazilian population was growing up in an environment of authoritarianism and protectionism, with paternalistic solutions that arise from Brazilian mutism, magical awareness, where there is no dialogue or critical capacity in society to relate to reality.

Social relations are divided by economic differences, creating a relationship of master and lord. Brazilian mutism is marked by the lack of community experience and the lack of social participation. Since there was no conscience of people or society, the external authority was the lord of the lands, he was the representative of the political power and managed everything. This form of domination prevented the development of cities: the people were marginalized from their civic rights and away from any experience of self-government and dialogue (Freire, P., 1972).

This is the past of Brazil that will motivate the author to create an education that can help people to get out of this anti-democratic experience, an anti-human experience that does not allow individuals to discover themselves as re-creators of their world, and being able to improve things.

Freire seeks to realize a national aspiration that has been present in all political discourses in Brazil since 1920: the literacy of the Brazilian people and the democratic expansion of popular participation. The oligarchic regime, prevailing in Brazil until 1930, took the issue of illiteracy and made it the subject of his speeches, transforming illiteracy into an empty verbalism, devoid of concrete action. The regime that came after the oligarchic regime continues along the same demagogic line that does not seek, in practice, a real and effective change, the liberation of man, but rather the elaboration of an attractive and fashionable discourse in his time.

Pablo Freire's work is critically linked to this incipient process of popular ascension. His political-educational praxis is developed in Brazil, in the middle of a classic dependency and underdevelopment scheme.

Freire is the one who creates the popular education movement in Brazil: with him he seeks to get the illiterate man out of his situation of unconsciousness, passivity and lack of criticism. His effort to seek to contribute to the liberation of his people is part of a time when many are looking for something similar.

In this period we can identify numerous procedures of a political, religious, social and cultural nature, to mobilize and raise awareness among people, from growing popular participation, through votes, to the popular culture movement organized by students. A whole movement of rural and urban trade unionism is also developed.

Altogether, Pablo Freire is a thinker committed to life, who does not think of abstract ideas, but thinks based on concrete existence. His educational project, which starts from praxis, aims to create humanization, to free man from everything that does not allow him to be truly a person.

He is aware that the society he has to live in has a structural dynamic that leads to the domination of consciences, which translates into a pedagogy that responds to the interests of the ruling classes. The methods that this pedagogy uses cannot serve the liberation of the oppressed, but rather they intend to impart among them the law of fear.

Faced with this situation, he reacts by affirming the need for the humanization of the oppressed that must start from themselves: it is the oppressed himself who must seek the ways of his liberation, since it cannot come from those who keep him in this situation.

Freire is very clear in stating that the situation of dehumanization that today's man is experiencing is not the true vocation to which he is called. His vocation is that of humanization and this must be conquered through a practice that frees him from his current condition. The necessary liberation that humanizes man will not fall from heaven, but will necessarily be the result of human effort to achieve it.

The pedagogy of the oppressed is that which must be elaborated by the oppressed himself, since the practice of freedom can only find adequate expression in a pedagogy in which the oppressed has the condition to discover and conquer, reflexively, as the subject of their own historical destiny.

The pedagogy of the oppressed, as a humanist and liberating pedagogy will, therefore, have two different but interrelated moments. The first, in which the oppressed are revealing the world of oppression and are engaged in praxis with its transformation, and the second, in which once transformed the oppressive reality, this pedagogy ceases to be the oppressed and becomes the pedagogy of men in the process of permanent liberation.

1.2. Freire's method

Freire's method is fundamentally a method of popular culture, which, in turn, translates into a popular policy. For this reason, author’s work aims primarily to raise awareness and politicize. Freire does not confuse the political and pedagogical levels: they are not absorbed, nor are they opposed. This is the education that seeks to be a practice of freedom.

Freire's method is rooted in his conception of man. Man is like a being in the world and with the world. The man's own, his fundamental position, is that of a being in situation; that is to say, a being enshrined in space and in a time that his intended consciousness captures and transcends. Only man is able to apprehend the world, to objectify the world, a constituent of his self which, in turn, constitutes it as a world of his conscience (Freire, P., 2004).

Consciousness is conscience of the world: the world and conscience, together, as conscience of the world, are dialectically constituted in the same movement, in the same history. In other words: to objectify the world is to historicize it, humanize it. Then, the world of consciousness is not creation, but human elaboration. That world is not constituted in contemplation but in work, as Freire explained (Freire, P., 1972).

Freire's method of awareness seeks to critically redo the dialectical process of historization. It does not seek to make man know his possibility of being free, but to learn to make his freedom effective, and by making it effective, exercise it. This pedagogy accepts the suggestion of anthropology that goes along the line of integration between thinking and living, education being imposed as a practice of freedom.

But man is not alone in the world, but also with the world. To be with him is to be open to the world, to grasp and understand it; is to act according to its purposes to transform it. Man responds to the challenges that the world is presenting to him, and with that he is changing it, endowing him with his own spirit (Beckett, K. S., 2013). In this sense it is not about any doing, but one that is linked to reflection.

If man is praxis, he cannot, therefore, be reduced to mere spectator, or to an object. This would be to go against his ontological vocation, a being that operates and transforms the world in which he lives and with which he lives.

Man and the world are in constant interaction: they cannot be understood outside of this relationship, since one implies the other. As an unfinished being and aware of his inconsistencies, man is a being of permanent search. Man could not exist without search, nor could search without man exist. Only by maintaining this interaction one can appreciate the truth of the world and of man, and at the same time understand that the real search is only carried out in communion, in dialogue and in freedom (Ellsworth, E., 1989).

The methodology used by Freire follows the same dialectical line: theory and method. The methodology arises from social practice to return, after reflection, on the same practice and transform it. In this way, the methodology is determined by the context of struggle in which educational practice is located: the frame of reference is defined by the historical and cannot be rigid or universal, but has to be built by men, in their quality of cognitive subjects, capable of transforming their reality.

The way in which Freire conceives the methodology, the main variables that serve as coordinates for the educational process as a political act and as an act of knowledge are expressed; these are: the creative and transformative capacity of man; the capacity of astonishment, that any person has, regardless of the position they occupy in the social structure; the social nature of the act of knowledge and its historical dimension.

Other characteristics of the Freire method are its mobility and inclusion capacity. As a pedagogy based on practice, it is constantly subject to change, dynamic evolution and reformulation. If man is an unfinished being, and this unfinished being is the center and engine of this pedagogy, it is obvious that the method will have to follow its rhythm of dynamics and development as a constant reformulation.

1.3. Transformation of the pedagogical relationship

According to Freire, education must begin by overcoming the educator-learner contradiction. It must be based on a comprehensive conception of the two poles in an integrating line, so that both become educators and learners. It is imperative that the humanist educator have a deep faith in man, in his creative and transforming power of reality. The educator must become a fellow student. It is necessary to understand that human life only makes sense in communion, that the educator's thinking only gains authenticity in the authenticity of the students' thinking, both mediated by reality and, therefore, in intercommunication (Benade, L., 2012).

Thought only finds its generating source in action on the world, a world that mediates consciences in communion. In this way, it becomes impossible to think of the overcoming of men over men.

In this way, education can no longer be the act of depositing, narrating, transferring knowledge and values to learners, less patient, as "deposit" education does, but being a cognitive act. Instead of being the end of the cognitive act of a subject, is the mediator of cognitive subjects, educator, on the one hand; learners, on the other, the problematic education puts, of course, the requirement of overcoming the educator-learner contradiction. Without this, the dialogic relationship, indispensable to the cognition of the cognitive subjects, is not possible, around the same cognitive object (Chen, R.H., 2016).

In this way, the educator is no longer the only one who educates, but also the one who is educated by the student in the education process, through the dialogue that is sustained. Both the educator and the student are in turn educating and educating in a dialectical process. This is how both become central subjects of the process in mutual growth; here the authority requires to be at the service, being with the freedoms and in no case against them (Peters, M. A., & Besley, T., 2015).

Now, nobody educates anyone, just as nobody educates himself, men are educated in communion, mediated by the world. In turn, learners are not docile recipients, such as storage warehouses, but rather they become active people, critical researchers, always in dialogue with the educator, who in turn is also a critical researcher.

The role of the critical researcher is to provide, always together with the students, the conditions for the overcoming of knowledge at the level of the dogma by true knowledge.

It is essential to carry out an education as a practice of freedom to deny the existence of abstract, isolated, loose, detached man from the world, and in the same way to deny the reality of the world separated from men.

Through an education for freedom the students are developing their power to capture and understand the world that, in their relations with it, are presented, not only as a static reality, but as a reality in transformation, in process. The tendency, then, of both the educator-learner and that of the learner-educator, is to establish an authentic way of thinking and action: to think of oneself and the world, simultaneously, without dichotomizing this thinking of action.

Problematic education is thus a permanent reinforcement through which men are critically perceiving how they are being in the world they are in and with what they are.

Clearly, the unfinished of the process of education appears as something unique and unique to man, which corresponds to his condition of being historical and historic. Only if the student can become aware of his true condition can he appropriate his historical reality and transform it. It is a search that goes along the lines of being more and more, of humanizing man. This search for being more must be carried out in communion with the other men, in situated solidarity.

2. Some key terms

In order to understand well what the author wants to convey to us, it is necessary to explain some key concepts:

1) Closed society: organization of the society that seeks to maintain the privileges of the ruling classes (elites), through different means that fulfill the function of alienating people. In this type of societies, participation, neither true democracy, nor the liberating dialogue that promotes the literacy method is not allowed.

2) Society in transition: it is the process that a society lives when it tries to change. It implies an accelerated march that leads society to a search for new themes. Paulo Freire does not refer to material changes.

3) Fundamental democratization: These are the basic principles that must be developed in a society so that it can reach true democracy, typical of open society. It is the process of participation of all people at all levels of society.

4) Radicalism: It is the option of enrichment of the man who takes a positive and critical option, where freedom is not lost. These are men open to dialogue, who accept the radicalism of other men with different positions.

5) Intransitive consciousness: It is the consciousness that does not present a commitment of man to his own existence.

6) Naive or magical consciousness: Tends to forget reality and dispense with it, seriously limiting freedom. The man with this consciousness fails to reach the deep root of reality, does not know its deep causes and his explanation of reality is of the fantastic type.

7) Critical awareness: It is the profound interpretation of true reality, knowing its most real causes and functioning. Who has this conscience, has a capacity for fruitful reasoning and dialogue, always trying to find the truth to engage in the construction of man.

8) Awareness: It is the process by which man not only becomes aware of his reality, but he does so critically committing to his concrete change.

9) Liberating education: The one that takes into account the true and real man, who starts from it and seeks to take it to its full humanization. Man is not liberated alone, nor is he liberated by another, but he is liberated in communion and starting from his reality.

10) Literacy: Method through which man "says" and in doing so he recognizes himself as co-creator of his life and his world. It is the moment in which man recognizes himself as he really is and commits himself to his humanization.

11) Banking education: Traditional education that does not recognize the dignity of men, but rather reifies them as mere receivers and repeaters (Jackson, L., 2016).

12) Problematic education: Education that takes man seriously and recognizes the real educational process of man as a continuous and respectful dialogue, where there are no teachers and students, but there are only teachers - students and student teachers, that is, where the educational process is a constant dialectical relationship.

Freire is known of a society in transition that has emerged from a closed society situation, which had an intransitive conscience, where there was no dialogue because of the mutism proper to "Lord - servant" relationships. This type of relationship is the one that tries to break Freire's method by teaching persons to recognize their own dignity and the position that each one is called to occupy in the construction of the liberation and recreation of reality (Roberts, P., 2010).

3. Conclusions

One of the main conclusions that we have been able to reach is that within Freire's theory, the principles that underpin education today are presented with vividness. The principle of individualization is presented in Freire through the valuation of the individual as a unique, unrepeatable, necessary and valuable being for the educational process centered on dialogue. In relation to the principle of autonomy, the theoretician emphasizes the need of people to achieve freedom and to project it further towards perfection. Paulo Freire develops all his methodology on the axis of the real liberation of the individual, which is nothing else that its dynamic humanization in unfinished process. Regarding the principle of socialization, Freire truly and honestly assumes the context in which he has to live, context of injustice and marginalization of the most and from it starts the formulation of a methodology that seeks to transform social reality into something integrative and inclusive, that is to say, in a place where the individual can concretely assume his being and his situated being to be able to free himself from everything that does not allow him to exist (Roberts, P., 2015). In this sense, Freire's phrase is decisive in that it indicates that individuals are not liberated only but in communion with others. Creativity, a principle so difficult to achieve today, is safeguarded by the novelty of the literacy method proposed by the author. It novelty formulates an appropriate response for this specific context with its specific needs. From this methodology it is clear the presence of the principle of the activity since it is the subject himself who and from whom the reality that is lived is reconstructed. The subject to whom the method is directed is the one who actually makes this process possible.

We think that Freire's proposal is effective because he able to capture the indivisible unity that exists between what we call theory and practice. He was able to develop all his effort from the reality that his people lived, concrete and painful reality, and project a methodology capable of responding educationally to the challenges it posed (Webster, S., 2016). His effort is not based on the needs assumed by intellectuals or by those who often think they know everything, but on the contrary, it starts from the concrete manifestation of reality, which is the concrete manifestation of those in need.

All these elements have helped our personal enrichment as it helps us to expand the vision of education that we are forming in preparation for our future endeavors.

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EDUCATION FOR ORAL HEALTH
- METHODS AND LESSON MODEL –

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Abstract: *Oral health education is a part of human health education. Education for health is essential for a healthy behaviour. According to the World Health Organization's concept of health, a healthy behaviour must be a normality for an educated life, and the level of health is a measure of qualitative life.Access to educational health services is important for good oral health. Health is a fundamental human right (W.H.O., 2002). This paper is a short review of the methods and techniques of oral health education and of the practical possibilities that can improve the level of general health knowledge. To this purpose, we propose a Model of health education lesson for adults. It can be used as a general model in continuous professional health education. Conclusion: Oral health education can be achieved through different techniques and methods, included in the universal approach of education.*

Key words: *health; education; oral health; methods; lesson model.*

Introduction

Over the past decades, significant progress has been made in health education. There has been an improvement in the methods and techniques of access to health education, especially to oral health education. Health is a human right, as stated in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), World Health Organization (W.H.O.), Declaration of Alma-Ata, International Conference on Primary Health Care (1978), European Social Charter Revised (1996), Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and its two optional protocols (2000), and Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, ratified by Romania in 1974 (C.E., 1996; C.R.C., 1989; C.S.E., 2000; M.O. 146/20.11.1974).

The right to health, as stipulated in the European Social Charter Revised in Article 11, asserts that 'Everyone has the right to benefit from any measures enabling him to enjoy the highest possible standard of health attainable' (C.E., Part

1, pg. 3, 03.05.1996). In accordance with this definition of human's right to health, education for health behaviour is a part of human health (W.H.O., 2012).

Citizens have the right to freely access prophylactic health services. Health education has, in essence, a preventive function in all areas of human health, including in the field of oral health (C.E., 1996; Gavrilă-Ardelean, Gavrilă-Ardelean, 2008, 2017).

According to Articles 11, 17 and 23, from European Social Charter Revised, the right to health is a universal right of all people, no matter whether they are in a vulnerable category or not. It must be respected by all European Union Member States. They must provide effective measures to directly protect the health of all citizens. This can also be done in cooperation with public or private organizations, by taking the appropriate measures needed to reduce causes of illness, and to facilitate and promote health education. Health education supports the development of individual responsibility for health and good behaviours. It can also help prevent epidemics.

These measures are universal for children's health and youth health. They must be taught in schools, throughout primary, secondary and tertiary education.

In Article 23, it is stipulated that the right to health for the elderly, enables them to choose their own life-style and to lead independent lives in their familiar surroundings for as long as they wish and are able to (O.N.U., 1991; C.E., 1996; W.H.O., 1951).

In conformity with the Declaration of Alma-Ata, International Conference on Primary Health Care (1978), based on European Social Charter Revised (1996), States are required to show, through practical measures, that they have an appropriate policy to educate both the general population and groups affected by specific problems.

The Charter complements Articles 2 and 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights, guaranteeing the human right to health protection. The policy adopted by the Member States regarding education must meet the needs of the general population and groups affected by specific problems (addictions), or with special needs (vulnerable groups). According to these Charts, health education must be part of the school curricula. Second to family, school is the most appropriate setting for health education because the general purpose of education is to import the knowledge and skills necessary for life. Informing the public, particularly through awareness-raising campaigns, must be a public health priority (https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files).

Education for health is a sustainable method for improving and maintaining the future health of humanity (Bird, Lutz, Warwick, 2008).

Research Methodology

Research methodology consists in a specialty literature review of health education and oral health education, viewed from the perspective of different educational methods (Baban, 2001; Cazacu, Badescu, 1981; King, 2005).

Research results

Health education of the population aims to (Podariu et al., 1999, in Gavrila, Gavrila & Grivu, 2009):

•Ensure better information about health and disease;

•Form community teachers to actively deal with this objective;

•Ensure their cooperation with teachers from under specialty like sociologists, psychologists (Brawn, Lent, 2008; Gavriluță, 2003);

•Achieve effective local infrastructure;

•Strengthen the role of each individual in his own health care.

The basic principles of health education are the following (Grivu, Podariu, et al., 1995; Grivu, Gavrila-Ardelean, et al., 2006):

•Priority principle: the earlier the intervention, the most effective the education;

•Specific nature and authority: the opinion of those with legitimate authority (doctors, nurses, teachers) is more reliable (Kaprio, Leo, 1991);

•Principle of integration of health education in national health program objectives (Petrea, 1998; Păun, 2001; O.N.U, 1991).

An essential component of health education is **to inform the general public** (Podariu et al., 1999).

A difficult situation needs much more collaboration between dentist and his patients to us is the lack of information to the general public. Even when attempts are made to information, they do not reach their goal because it does not consider "necessary and natural human desires" (Grivu and collaborators, 1995). An example is offered by the television commercials that are for toothpastes and cavity-preventive chewing gum: on the small screen appears a dentist showing, for example, that sweets are broken down into acids that attack the tooth enamel. Or, to have big impact on public advertising should be based on aesthetic considerations, because beauty is a human requirement. If they say "by not washing your teeth, they hurt and they're not nice anymore", results would be completely different.

In terms of dental medicine, health is threatened by four types of conditions:

•Dental cavities;

•Gum diseases;

•Malformations and dentofacial abnormalities;

•Cancer.

In all prevention plays a particularly prophylaxis (primary prevention) can be very effective. Secondary prevention (screening and early treatment) as tertiary prevention (maintenance, prosthetics) also falls within the public health programs. Or, for informing the general public, health education should be made on a wide scale. This education is complex because it has to start early and to be continued permanently, with the support of the public education and dentistry. Unfortunately, we do not do many things because of the lack of money.

The information materials should be published in pamphlet form that addresses to various age groups on various topics: brushing, excessive sugar consumption risks, the role of fluoride, the presentation to periodic inspections (Podariu et al., 1999, in Gavrila, Gavrila, Grivu, 2009). The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry regularly broadcasts such brochures throughout the United States. Some brochures are addressed to family with references to dental health of the child, other brochures are addressed to youth and others present techniques and new materials, such as those for sealing cracks (www.unicef.ro). Informing the general public can be assured by two means: the hygiene equipment manufacturers' action, and vehiculation of the communication (mass-media).

The manufacturers of toothbrushes, toothpastes, mouthwashes, etc., are striving to secure a commercial informative advertising. It is however considering selling those products rather than informing the public on how to use.

The vehiculation of the communication (mass-media) can be done by (Podariu and collaborators, 1999; Baume, 1978):

•daily newspapers;
•periodic newspapers;
•display;
•radio;
•cinema;
•Television;
•digital devisers with Internet (mobile, etc.).

The regional daily newspapers could publish information materials focused on dental pathology specific to that area.

Unfortunately, even if they would do this, newspapers are read more by men than by women, and the interest in reading is decreasing.

The periodic newspapers can provide a better audience to people to whom they are addressed. Some periodicals publish health education materials. An example is the weekly Focus in Timisoara (Grivu, 1980).

The poster must communicate the message in seconds.

The local radio could present a short program every morning for 1-2 minutes that would have large public audience. Some stations do, but unfortunately the appropriate authorities' disinterest manifests itself here too.

Television might be the most powerful transmission mean in health education, as long as the audiovisual message is appropriate.

The educational materials are another crucial component of the health education. The most important are (Podariu and collaborators 1999; in Gavrila, Gavrila, Grivu, 2008):

•the movies;

•the videotapes and DVDs;

•the brochures and picture books.

All these can be used in dental offices and the brochures and books may be disseminated in schools and at home.

Model of health education lesson for adults (development after the *Model of OECD Skills Outlook*, 2013) for a class of 24 people.

Lesson objectives: by the end of the session, trainees will identify key elements in current papers on the topic of health. They will be able to identify which elements can be ameliorated or changed. They will have gained the ability to promote health-related ideas to a news desk, while keeping in mind the readership.

Table 1. Model of health education lesson for adults

Content unit	Teaching meth	resource	time (minutes)
Introducing the trainer and The participants	Presentation Lecture	Power-Point	5 ‘
level of knowledge about THE SUBJECT	Discussion	Flip Chart	10 ‘
Key issue	Discussion Brainstorming	Flip Chart	5 ‘
Review Key points	Open discussion	Flip Chart	10 ‘
Task 1	Workshops	Power-Point Flip Chart	20 ‘
Group Feedback 1	Discussion	Flip Chart	10 ‘
Task 2	Workshops Technical applications	Power-Point Flip Chart	20 ‘
Group Feedback 2	Discussion	Flip Chart	5 ‘
Review	Reflect discussion	Flip Chart	5 ‘
			Class time 90’[36]

[36] Timings can be changed according to class size and duration of lesson.

Conclusions

Human's right to health is a complex right, which includes: acces to health services, the right to be informed, the right to be educated for health behaviour, access to prevention services and awareness campaigns. Oral health education can be achieved through different techniques and methods, included in the universal approach of education.

A health educator/ trainer, requires the following professional competencies:

•In-depth knowledge about the right to health;

•Ability to gather from all relevant sources and exchange informations on health, illness and the right to health;

•Maintain active dialogue with the main actors and with agencies specialized in providing health programs;

•Keeping updated to changes in law, health policies, and clinical good practices.

In conclusion, to fulfill his duties, the health education trainer has to focus on a couple of major educational objectives: promoting the right to health and developing good practices in individual health and in community health.

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THE INFLUENCE OF EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION ON THE SATISFACTION OF LIFE AND THE AUTONOMOUS ORIENTATION OF INDIVIDUALS

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Abstract: *The objective of the study. The purpose of the study is to discover the extent to which extrinsic motivation influences the satisfaction of individuals' lives. Participants and design. The study was conducted on a sample of 80 people from Arad County, of which 40 male participants and 40 female participants, aged between 18 and 55 years. The participants signed the informed consent form for the participation agreement. They received questionnaires in pencil-paper format. The study used The Satisfaction with Life Scale and The General Causality Orientation Scale to measure the variables needed to process the hypothesis.*

Results. The obtained results indicate that there is a statistically weak correlation between the two variables.

Key words: *life satisfaction; extrinsic motivation; self-determination theory; autonomous orientation.*

Introduction

The theory of self-determination underlines the idea that the need for autonomy, relationships and competence must be satisfied in order to bring about well-being but also personal efficiency. (So & Ryan, 2000). An inductive-deductive idea generated by the theory of self-determination that has been empirically tested is that some social media favor or hinder the satisfaction of the three fundamental needs assumed (Vansteenkiste & Ryan, 2013).

The concept of personal causation means that a certain action or activity is motivationally supported by a personal internal attitude where the need for autonomy is more or less satisfied, (So & Ryan, 1975), and the action is perceived as being intimately linked to each individual self and internal causation, or imposed from the outside, motivated or controlled causality. Numerous researches have provided empirical evidence that shows the existence of these motivational causes but also the close connection with the emergence of the activity and life quality (Weinstein, Przybylski, & Ryan, 2012).

The theory of self-determination shows that a person's motivation, development and performance can reach the highest levels provided that the context satisfies his or her basic psychological needs for competence, autonomy and belonging or relationship.

These fundamental needs are considered as finding the ingredients for the proactivities, the development of the motivational optimum and the psychological health of the people. (So, Vansteenkiste, & Lens, 2006).

So Ryan, the authors of the theory, distinguish between different motivational modes, which are based on different goals and motives, the main distinction is that between intrinsic motivation, which refers to doing something because it is interesting and enjoyable for it, and extrinsic motivation, which refers to taking action to achieve certain rewards and separable outcomes (So & Ryan, 2000). The theory of self-determination, considered to be a macro-theory of motivation, argues that people are motivated to obtain the preservation of health and well-being, motivation is regarded as a psychological energy that is directed towards a certain purpose. This theory investigates the level where the individual's behavior is self-defined and autonomous, and the basic principle of his theory includes the hypothesis that underlines the idea that people have an innate tendency to devolution and growth, to solve psychological inconsistencies and integration, to health and well-being, (So & Ryan, 2000).

Methodology

Research type: The study is a quantitative one, using the cross-sectional method of data collection.

The study design has the correlational purpose of interpreting and analyzing the results.

The objective of the research: Starting with the review of the specialized literature, this paper aims to investigate the relationship between extrinsic motivation and life satisfaction.

The research sample.

The study was conducted on a sample of 80 people, according to gender, thus 40 male participants and 40 female participants, between the ages of 18 and 50 years.

Procedure.

The questionnaires were applied after the consent of the participants was obtained. The participants received the two questionnaires for completing, in pencil-paper format, being previously assured of the confidentiality of the data to be processed and trained in detail.

Participants completed the questionnaires on average 20-25 minutes. The study was conducted over a period of two weeks, in November 2019.

Methods.

The following tools were used in this research:

The Satisfaction with Life Scale, which was published in 1985 by researchers: E. Diener; R.A. Emmons, R. J. Larsen; S. Griffin.

The General Causality Orientation Scale, published in 1985 by researchers: E. Dieci; RM Ryan. The scale being translated into Romanian from the English language.Rezultatele cercetării și interpretarea datelor statistice

Hypothesis: There is a positive correlation between well-being and intrinsic motivation, so that individuals with a common, autonomous causality, after meeting the needs of relationship, autonomy and competence will benefit from a higher degree of life satisfaction.

To test this hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient (r) was calculated, at the autonomous orientation dimension that was measured with the GCOS scale, with life satisfaction, which was measured using the SWLS questionnaire.

Results of research and interpretation

Indicate that between the two variables, there is a statistically weak correlation, $p = 0.011$, $r(68) = 0.273$.The hypothesis is confirmed, satisfying the fundamental needs within the theory of self-determination - the need for competence, relationship and autonomy lead to increase life satisfaction and autonomous orientation

Conclusion

For the functioning and harmonious development of individuals, emphasis must be placed on their basic psychological needs: competence, autonomy and relationship. As these needs are met, individuals will develop and function efficiently, achieving a well-being. Thus, extrinsic motivation contributes to increased life satisfaction and self-orientation.

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INTERVENTIONS AIMED TO PREVENT BREAST CANCER BY PROMOTING SELF-EXAMINATION: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract: *Early detection of breast cancer plays an essential role in reducing morbidity and mortality caused by the disease. This review is intended to summarize and outline the outcomes obtained as a result of the educational interventions focused on promoting breast cancer prevention by developing and effectively employing the ability involving breast self-examination procedure; these interventions are addressed by a series of studies centered on an individual randomization of participants and at least one control group. With that end in view, we carried out a systematic search in the PubMed and PsycInfo databases and we found 21 eligible studies which involved 5754 women. Most of these studies reported increases in breast self-examination frequency after the subjects' participation in interventions. Therefore, the conclusion of this review is that educational interventions may result in adopting new and efficient breast cancer prevention behaviors such as breast self-examination, which is an undeniable argument to increase the level of dissemination of such interventions among women.*

Key words: *prevention; breast cancer; breast self-examination; BSE, review;*

Introduction

Cancer is a serious illness, which, when remains untreated, poses a major threat to anyone's life. According to data available on the Word Health Organization (WHO) website (April 2020), cancer is one of the leading causes of death worldwide; furthermore, the scientists estimated that in 2018, over 9.6 million deaths were caused by this terrible illness. At the individual level, the studies showed that over the course of the illness trajectory, the individuals who were positively diagnosed as well as their families dealt with major consequences at the physical level (Cieślak, 2013; Glajchen, 2012), the mental level (Ştefănuţ, & Vintilă, 2019a; Ştefănuţ, & Vintilă , 2019b; Stefanut &Vintila, 2020; Vahidi et al., 2016) as well as at the spiritual levels (Cieślak, 2013). The burden brought by this disease can be reduced by taking into account the WHO recommendations.

According to this organization, many cancers have a high chance of being cured if they are detected at an early stage and treated properly. Therefore, a special attention has been paid in the specialty literature in relation to the development of cancer prevention programs and health education.

The ultimate and utmost purpose of health education lies not only in changing those behaviors that are supposed to be harmful to health but also in adopting certain behaviors that promote health (Simonds, 1976) at the individual or group level or at the level of wider communities (Gavrila-Ardelean, 2019). Health promotion behaviors may take into account: (1) primary prevention aiming at avoiding the onset of the disease; (2) secondary prevention aimed at detecting the disease in its early stages; (3) tertiary prevention aimed at rehabilitating the subject who dealt with and experienced a serious illness (WHO). Researchers managed to identify several levels at which health education may be effectively implemented and may significantly influence people's health behaviors: (1) the cognitive level; (2) the interpersonal level; (3) the institutional level; (4) the community level and (5) the public policy level (McLeroy, Bibeau, Steckler, & Glanz, 1988). Health education reflects a fusion of approaches, methods and strategies taken from the social and medical sciences and consequently, it is based on theoretical and practical perspectives, which, in their turn, all are based on psychology, sociology, communication, care (nursing), economics and marketing (Glanz, Rimer & Viswanath, 2008, Gavrila-Ardelean & Gavrila-Ardelean, 2016). Psychological communication helps improve affectivity which is of highest necessity in order to achieve mental balance in this difficult process (Goian, 2019). Also, social workers are involved in this process, who have the skills to deal with individuals and families in this situation and who are also used to a professional language for this area (Goian, 2004, Goian, 2010, Gavrila-Ardelean, & Gavrila-Ardelean, 2017).

One of the most important areas of applicability of health education is cancer prevention education. Given the context of different types of cancer, breast cancer (BC) is the second most common type worldwide, with 2.09 million cases (WHO). In Romania, this type of cancer is ranked on the third place in terms of incidence (11.5%) with a mortality of 6.6%. Thus, early detection of BC advocated by health education may play a significant role in reducing morbidity and mortality as a wider range of treatment options are available in the early stages of the disease and the survival rate may significantly increase as a result of early diagnosis (Bener et al.. 2009). Early detection of BC may be obtained by using the following screening methods: breast self-examination (BSE), clinical breast examination (CBE) and mammography (Rosmawati, 2010). Even if using BSE as the exclusive method of BSE early detection is not appropriate, the American Cancer Society recommends it as an option for women as young as 20 years old. Unlike CBE and mammography, BSE does not require a visit to the doctor or any other special expertise, it is cheap, simple, non-invasive and can be done at home. According to the recommendations made by the American Cancer Society, women should know how they feel and how their breasts look like, so that when feeling something unusual during the self-examination procedure, they will be able to promptly report such changes to the specialist physician.

As a result of the aspects outlined above, the experts developed and implemented not only certain interventions intended to support patients and their families in their efforts and struggles to cope with the disease (Vintilă, Ştefănuţ, & Sârbescu, 2019) but also several educational interventions whose purpose was focused on breast cancer prevention by promoting the BSE. As far as the authors are aware of, until the date of publication of this paper, there was a systematic review of the specialized literature (Janz, Becker, Anderson, & Marcoux, 1990) that analyzed the BSE interventions, but no other similar research was conducted lately. Therefore, this study aims to summarize the outcomes obtained as a result of the interventions that have taken into account the BSE.

Methodology

Research methods used to identify the eligible studies

We managed to get possession of a series of articles and papers relevant for the subject we have hereby underlined following a systematic research we have carried out in the PubMed and PsycInfo databases. To that effect, we have used the following search algorithm: "breast self examination" AND (intervention OR program). Its application at the level of abstracts helped us, at the same time, to acquire a wider and specifically-oriented base of selection. The search algorithm included no time limit and this fact allowed us to consider both recent and older researches.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

In order to be considered eligible, the studies had to include female subjects of at least 18 years of age and who had not been previously diagnosed with cancer.

Another requirement was that the studies should consider only researches based on an experimental pattern, i.e. only those studies for which there was an individual random distribution in groups, for which there was a control group and which included interventions aimed at increasing the BSE frequency intended to prevent breast cancer occurrence. Furthermore, again, for eligibility purposes, the studies had to document valuable data related to BSE.

Selection process

We managed to identify a number of 456 studies thanks to the research algorithm we have applied to the aforementioned databases. However, of all 456 studies, 53 were found to be duplicates and consequently they have been removed and the remaining 403 studies were analyzed at the abstract level. By applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, we removed another 306 studies because: 180 of them did not meet the design criteria, 99 provided no BSE information, 8 did not address the breast cancer prevention aspects, 10 did not meet the inclusion criteria regarding the participants, 3 were not published in English and no abstracts were available for the last 6 studies. Therefore, during the next stage, i.e. the analysis conducted at the level of the entire text, we focused on the remaining 97 studies. Of these, 68 had a distinct design which was completely different than the one which was of interest for this research, 4 did not provide BSE data and 4 were not available. After this last selection, 21 studies were found to be eligible and ready to be included in the final analysis. The selection process is shown in the PRISMA diagram outlined as *Figure 1*.

Data extraction

Using the following standard, we managed to pull out relevant data from all eligible studies we have included in our analysis: country where the study has been carried out, number of participants, their average age, type of intervention that has been conducted (face-to-face, text message, multimedia), number of the intervention sessions and their cumulative length, intervention description, all educational methods that have been employed and last but not least, all major outcomes that have been obtained.

Results

Characteristics of all participants in the studies

The final analysis included 21 studies which involved 5745 subjects. The number of participants fluctuated from 37 (Visser, Bos, Prins, Hoogerbrugge, &van Laarhoven, 2015) and 899 (McLendon, Fulk, & Starnes, 1982), giving thus an average of 274. The subjects' average age was 38,16 years, with a minimum threshold of 18.78 years documented in the studies signed by Craun, &Deffenbacher, 1987 and a maximum threshold of 53.75 years, reported by Lindberg, Stevens, Smith, Glasgow, &Toobert, 2009). 52% of the aforementioned studies were carried out in USA (Audrain et al., 1999; Bodurtha et al. 2009; Champion, & Scott, 1993; Craun, & Deffenbacher, 1987; Fitzgibbon, Gapstur, & Knight, 2003; Grady, Goodenow, & Borkin, 1988; Lauver, 1989; Lindberg et al., 2009; McLendon et al., 1982; Mishra et al., 1998; Reis, Trockel, King, & Remmert, 2004). The second country which documented 14% of the number of studies was Iran (Hajian, Vakilian, Najabadi, Hosseini, & Mirzaei, 2011; Naserian, Ansari, &Abedi, 2018; Savabi-Esfahani, Taleghani, Noroozi, & Tabatabaeian, 2017), while Turkey reported 9% (Secginli, &Nahcivan, 2011; Tuzcu, Bahar, &Gözüm, 2016). Australia (Janda, Stanek, Newman, Obermair, & Trimmel, 2002), Jordan (Alsaraireh, & Darawad, 2019), Malaesia (Akhtari-Zavare et al., 2016), the Netherlands (Visser et al., 2015), UK (Prestwich et al., 2005) carried out one similar research, representing this 5% of all studies subject to our analysis.

Main characteristics of studies

The major purpose and scope of all papers considered for our final analysis was the promotion of BSE as a way of preventing breast cancer. 62% of the studies subject to this review have based their interventions on different theories.

Therefore, the Health Belief Model has been used in seven studies (Akhtari-Zavare et al., 2016; Bodurtha et al., 2009; Champion, & Scott, 1993; Craun, & Deffenbacher, 1987; Hajian et al., 2011; Secginli, & Nahcivan , 2011; Tuzcu et al., 2016), while other two studies employed the Self-Regulation Theory (Lauver, 1989; Prestwich et al., 2005). Cognitive-Behavioral Theory, Self-Efficacy Theory, Behavioral Theory and Theory of Planned Behavior were the basis for a study authored by Audrain et al. (1999), Mishra et al. (1998), Grady et al. (1988) and Janda et al. (2002).

A major part of these studies (85%) involved interventions conducted face to face (Alsaraireh, & Darawad, 2019; Akhtari-Zavare et al., 2016; Audrain et al., 1999; Bodurtha et al., 2009; Champion, & Scott, 1993; Craun, & Deffenbacher, 1987; Fitzgibbon et al., 2003; Grady et al., 1988; Hajian et al., 2011; Lauver, 1989; Lindberg et al., 2009; McLendon et al., 1982; Mishra et al., 1998; Prestwich et al., 2005; Savabi-Esfahani et al., 2017; Secginli, & Nahcivan, 2011; Tuzcu et al., 2016; Visser et al., 2015). The remaining studies reported the following as methods of delivering the intervention: text message (Naserian et al., 2018), video recording (Janda et al., 2002) and CD-ROM (Reis et al., 2004). Ten of the interventions were conducted in groups (Alsaraireh, & Darawad, 2019; Akhtari-Zavare et al., 2016; Craun, & Deffenbacher, 1987; Fitzgibbon et al., 2003; Hajian et al., 2011; Janda et al., 2002; Mishra, et al., 1998; Prestwich et al., 2005; Savabi-Esfahani et al., 2017; Tuzcu et al., 2016), and the other ten were conducted individually (Audrain et al., 1999; Bodurtha et al., 2009; Champion, & Scott, 1993; Grady et al., 1988; Lauver, 1989; Lindberg et al., 2009; McLendon et al., 1982; Naserian et al., 2018; Reis et al., 2004; Visser et al., 2015). There was also a study involving an intervention which consisted in two parts: one part was done in a group and another part was carried out individually (Secginli, & Nahcivan, 2011).

The number of contacts for interventions ranged from 1 (Alsaraireh, & Darawad, 2019; Audrain et al., 1999; Bodurtha et al., 2009; Champion, & Scott, 1993; Craun, & Deffenbacher, 1987; Grady et al., 1988; Hajian and al., 2011; Janda et al., 2002; Lauver, 1989; Lindberg et al., 2009; McLendon et al., 1982; Prestwich et al., 2005; Savabi-Esfahani et al., 2017; Secginli, & Nahcivan, 2011; Tuzcu et al., 2016; Visser et al., 2015) and 16 (Fitzgibbon et al., 2003) with an average of 2. For the studies that provided information regarding the length of interventions, the average cumulative duration was 1.8h with a minimum intervention time of 0.15h (Lauver, 1989) and a maximum length of 8h (Mishra et al., 1998).

The interventions employed different educational methods, such as: presentation, guided exploration, question & answer sessions, practical demonstration, exercising the BSE by the participants, role playing, video watching. The educational materials included in these sessions were also varied: power point presentations, video clips, pamphlets, manuals, various reminders, artificial breast models, graphics, pictures.

Summarizing the results depending on their theoretical substantiation

Results of interventions based on Health Belief Model

Most of the studies that had a theoretical foundation were based on the Health Belief Model. According to this model, where a person believes that he/she is prone to develop a disease with serious consequences and/or where he/she considers that there is available a series of actions intended to decrease the probability of disease occurrence or to diminish its consequences and where the benefits of implementing such actions exceed the possible costs, then he/she is likely to adopt reasonable preventive behaviors. The studies based on this model aimed to educate all participants in relation to both the disease and the prevention thereof as well as to change their beliefs about disease. Most interventions based on the Health Belief Model reported statistically significant improvements in terms of the BSE in the intervention groups compared to the control groups (Akhtari-Zavare et al., 2016; Champion, & Scott, 1993; Craun, & Deffenbacher 1987; Hajian et al., 2011; Secginli, & Nahcivan, 2011; Tuzcu et al., 2016). There is also a study that led to the statistically insignificant increase of BSE in the intervention group compared to the control group (Bodurtha et al., 2009).

Results of interventions based on Self-Regulation Theory

According to this theory, stressful circumstances lead to the onset of a self-regulation process. As it is believed that objective, concrete information promotes coping by maki8ng available a scheme of specific and unambiguous elements related to that particular circumstance, the interventions are based on providing such information. One of the studies that used this framewok achieved a statistically significant increase in terms of the BSE in the intervention group compared to the control group (Prestwich et al., 2005), while another intervention also showed improvements which, unfortunately are not statistically significant (Lauver, 1989).

Results of interventions based on Cognitiv- Behavioral Theory

The research conducted by Audrain et al. (1999) uses the problem-solving training as a support for the intervention. This is a cognitive-behavioral intervention that monitors and outlines the development of coping skills by applying the following steps: defining the problem, generating and evaluating solutions, deciding on the best solution and implementing it. As a consequence of participating in this intervention, the women in the intervention group presented a statistically insignificant increase in BSE frequency compared to those in the control group.

Results of interventions based on Behavioral Theory

According to the behavioral theory, a behavior is either maintained or waived depending on its consequences. Starting from the affirmation that BSE has either negative consequences (if changes are found in breasts) or neutral consequences (if there are no breast changes), Grady et al. (1988) have substantiated their interventions on the introduction of external rewards or self-rewards. As a result of this research, they found that external rewards are more effective. They also noticed that although self-reward was used by only half the participants, when used it proved to be more efficient than external rewards.

Results of interventions based on Self-Efficacy Theory

According to Bandura's theory of self-efficacy (1977), a subject's perception of self-efficiency with regard to performing a task is enhanced by increasing the expertise in performing that particular task. As a result of the increased self-efficiency, we may also notice the behavior change (in this case the adoption of BSE) and the improvement of the outcome (prevention). The intervention substantiated on this theory and which was included in the study of Mishra, et al. (1998) led to a significant increase in the participants' knowledge, self-efficiency and BSE.

Results of interventions based on Theory of Planned Behavior

According to this theory (Ajzen, & Fishbein, 1980) the BSE-related behavior is highly influenced by the subject's intention to achieve it, by his/her attitude towards such behavior and the subjective standards (what the other relevant persons think about such behavior) and last but not least, by the feeling to control it. This was the substantiation of the intervention carried out by Janda et al. (2002) who found that women in the intervention group performed BSE more frequently than those in the control group.

Summarizing the outcomes that have been obtained depending on their breadth

If we make reference to the effectiveness of the educational interventions that have been performed, we found that most of the studies (57%) reported significantly better results regarding the BSE in the intervention group compared to the control group. Thus, upon the completion of the programs, the participants in the intervention groups described by the following studies documented a significantly higher frequency of BSE than the participants from the control groups: Akhtari-Zavare et al. (2016) (IG: 34.19%; CG: 18.55%), Tuzcu et al. (2016) (IG: 56%; CG: 32.3%), Hajian et al. (2011) (IG: 82%; CG: 62%), Secginli and Nahcivan (2011) (36.1%; CG: 11.8%), Lindberg et al. (2009) (IG: 59%; CG: 12.2%), Reis et al. (2004) (IG: 92.6%; CG: 72%). We also noticed that the averages of the BSE behaviors in the intervention groups are significantly higher than in the control groups in the following studies: Alsaraireh and Darawad (2019) (IG: M = 2.59, SD = 0.54; CG: M = 1.27, SD = 0.61), Mishra, et al. (1998) (M = 5; SD = 1.1; CG: M = 1.7; SD = 1.4), Champion and Scott (1993) (IG1: M = 10.54; SD = 3.35; IG2: M = 10.4; SD = 3.1; IG3: M = 11; SD = 2.51; IG4: M = 9.44; SD = 4.05).

Other studies also reported improvements in BSE frequency in the intervention groups as compared to the control groups, but these were not statistically significant (Bodurtha et al., 2009; Audrain et al., 1999; Fitzgibbon et al., 2003; Janda et al., 2002; Lauver, 1989; Savabi-Esfahani et al., 2017; Visser et al., 2015).

There was also a study (Naserian et al., 2018) which, following the intervention, documented a significantly better score that was obtained in the intervention group compared to the control group with regard to CBE, but, unfortunately, it outlined a lower score in the intervention group compared to the control, in terms of the BSE.

A synthesis of the data excerpted from the studies has been outlined in *Table 1*.

Discussions

This review attempted to summarize and analyze the results of randomized interventions that aimed at promoting BSE. Following the systematic searches conducted in the PubMed and PsycInfo databases, we managed to find 21 studies that met the criteria for inclusion in our final analysis. Most of them (57%) reported interventions that led to statistically significant improvements in BSE practice. This outcome is in agreement with the results found by Agide, Sadeghi, Garmaroudi and Tigabu (2018), who show that the interventions have succeeded in increasing the screening for BC in one way or another, but the best results seem to have been obtained by the individual interventions. i.e. by the type of intervention that was in fact targeted by our review.

Most of the researches included in this systematic review (62%) have been based on a certain theoretical model while 54% of them were substantiated by the Health Belief Model. Except for one of these studies based on the Health Belief Model, all others reported statistically significant increases in the BSE. This finding is consistent with those highlighted by Naz, Simbar, Fakari and Ghasemi (2018) who found that three quarters of the studies analyzed in the review they have authored were rooted in the Health Belief Model and most of them obtained significant results regarding the carrying out of BSE, CBE or mammography. We also noticed that the rest of the theoretically substantiated researches included in this analysis documented certain improvements in BSE frequency, but these improvements were statistically significant only for the study based on Bandura's self-efficacy theory. With regards to the studies included in the analysis and which had no specific theoretical basis for the interventions that have been performed, we noted that 50% of them reported statistically significant improvements in terms of the BSE frequency.

Using text messages, video recordings and interactive computer programs are just other ways of delivering interventions that employ contemporary technology. The study that used a computer program to disseminate the intervention obtained statistically significant increases in the frequency of BSE; on the other hand, the studies that used video recordings led to statistically insignificant improvements in terms of this behavior and the those which used text messages documented a higher frequency of BSE in the control group than in the intervention group. It should be noted that the intervention performed via the computer program also included a component that provided for the practice of breast examination on an artificial model. These outcomes finally lead to the idea that although modern technology may facilitate the transmission of educational messages, it may be necessary that to use other features of the intervention in order to compensate for the lack of direct interaction with subjects.

If we were to refer exclusively to the format of interventions (individual or group interventions), we may notice that seven of ten studies that used group interventions and four of ten studies that used individual interventions documented statistically significant increases in BSE. Also, the study that included an intervention performed in the group but which also integrated the individual guided practice of the BSE reported significant improvements in terms of BSE.

A specific educational method included in the interventions was the practice of breast examination. Eight of eleven studies that reported the use of this method have reported statistically significant increases in BSE frequency. This finding is consistent with the previous findings according to which the use of different educational materials leads to the increase of BSE (Agide et al., 2018).

57% of the studies included in the analysis provided information on the length of the intervention. Two thirds of them had an intervention length of at least one hour, while the remaining 1/3 documented that the intervention lasted between 10-30 minutes. In six of the studies whose interventions lasted at least one hour and in two of the interventions that lasted no more than half an hour, statistically significant increases in BSE frequency were obtained. However, the available data do not allow the hypothesis regarding a relation between the length of the intervention and the final outcomes, but future papers should consider focusing on setting up an optimum number of interventions whose main objectives should be the BSE frequency, as major topic for future analysis.

From the aspects outlined above, we may sum up that educational interventions may result in adopting certain cancer prevention behaviors such as BSE. Following this review, the authors' opinion is that the ideal educational intervention to promote BSE should be based on the Health Belief Model, it should include guided breast examination practice and should also promote the subject's perceived self-efficacy in building up and consolidating this behavior. As has been pointed out in other studies (Kennedy et al., 2016), educational programs on BC screening have a relatively low cost and may report significant health benefits for women.

Nevertheless, this research is accompanied by some limitations. The fact that there were included only researches published in English and which have been subject to a peer-review process is just one of these limitations. Although this method provided a high quality of the studies included in the analysis, it unfortunately excluded numerous dissertations, unpublished studies and conference proceedings. Thus, the number of reviews that have been analyzed was relatively small. The use of certain rigorous inclusion criteria may have contributed to this small number of researches. Another limitation of this paper may also be the fact that it offers only a qualitative analysis of the studies that have been outlined. Once with increasing the homogeneity of outcomes reporting in the future studies, it will be possible to consider the meta-analytical analysis. The fact that this review considered eligible solely the individual interventions and not the community-based interventions may also be a limitation, but the analysis of the latter interventions may be subject to other future studies. Because most of the studies were conducted in the USA, the generality these outcomes may be reduced, which may also be regarded as a limitation of this review. The future studies may also aim to diversify the delivery of interventions as well as to analyze which are the most effective educational methods which may be implemented in order to increase the BSE frequency.

Conclusions

Most of the educational interventions that have been analyzed documented significant results in promoting BSE as a breast cancer screening strategy. The outcomes highlighted herein stand for a robust argument in terms of increasing the level of dissemination of such interventions among women in order to promote the prevention of this type of cancer.

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